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PRIMER OF LIṄGĀYATISM

N. G. MAHADEVAPPA

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AUTHOR'S WORDS

It is unfortunate that not much is written in English on Liṅgāyatism which deserves non-Kannadiga readers' attention. What is written about it is either false or scanty. The chief reason for this is that the philosophical and religious doctrines of Liṅgāyatism are enshrined in the Kannada Vacanas written by the Basavaṇṇa and his colleagues of the 12th century and by a few followers in the 15th and later centuries. This means that the authentic study of Liṅgāyatism is restricted to those who know Kannada.

Secondly, it is sadly noted that much harm has been done by circulation of wrong beliefs that Liṅgāyatism is same as Vīraśaivism, that it is a sect of Śaivism, that it is as old as Rāmāyaṇa, that *Siddhāṇta-śikhāmaṇī* is the first work of Liṅgāyatism and the Vacanas repeat its doctrines in Kannada, that the Sanskrit Śaiva Āgamas and *Śrīkara-bhāṣya* which teach Vīraśaivism are prior to Basava and so on. It is also sadly noted that people have written books and articles on Vīraśaivism without knowing a word of Kannada Vacanas. The writings of Prof. S.N.Dasgupta and Gopinath Kaviraj are the examples. There is no need to say that they have missed the heart of Liṅgāyatism.

It is the chief purpose of this book to counter these mistakes and to present Liṅgāyatism in its proper perspective. As a student of philosophy, I have tried to show that the metaphysics of Liṅgāyatism is not Śivādvaita of Nīlakaṇṭha (though it is called Śivādvaita), nor Śakti-viśiṣṭādvaita as it is often labelled, but a kind of monism which is different from spiritual monism of Śaṅkara (Śūddhādvaita). It is a kind of panentheism.

It must be noted that there is no unanimity among the Vacanakāras (writers of the Vacanas) about the metaphysical doctrines of Liṅgāyatism. What is presented here is set of doctrines held by most of them.

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As the Vacanakāras were no professional philosophers, they did not present their philosophy in a systematic manner. Nor have they, unlike the traditional schools of Indian philosophy, presented their theory of knowledge (pramāṇas), because they had none.

My study of Liṅgāyatism depends heavily on the Kannada Vacanas and occasionally on other Kannada and Sanskrit works. In most of the cases I have tried to philosophically justify both the doctrines of the Vacanakāras and my own interpretation of them. It involves, inevitably, refutation of the rival doctrines. This, however, does not mean that I deal with issues in depth. Nor have I dealt with all aspects of Liṅgāyatism. For example, I have not dealt with rituals and monasteries of Liṅgāyatism (I intend to add chapters about them in the next edition). As the title suggests, it only tries to present the basic issues related to Liṅgāyatism.

What the readers find in the following pages is already published by me in books and journals of Kannada and English. In some cases I have lifted sentences and passages from my printed but unpublished book.

I heartily acknowledge my deep thankful gratitude to my friends who went through the manuscripts, particularly, Dr.K.B.Prabhuprasad, Dr. Mallikarjun Patil, Sri Kiran Bellad, Sri Subbarao and Sri Shivananda and offered useful and constructive suggestions. I am grateful to my graandson, Pratham, who desgned the cover page. I gratefully thank Prof. G.B.Halyal, Sri Kiran Bellad, Smt. Suma Sunil and my wife, Sarvamangala, for fiinancing the publication of this book. I must also thank my wife without whose help this book would not have seen light.

I also thank Shri K. Ashok and his colleagues for printing the book neatly and quickly.

N. G. Mahadevappa

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KEY TO PRONUNCIATION OF DIACRITICAL FONTS

अ	आ	इ	ई	उ	ऊ	ऋ	ए	ऐ	ऐ	ओ	ओ	औ	अम्	अः
ಅ	ಆ	ಇ	ಈ	ಉ	ಊ	ಋ	ಎ	ಏ	ಐ	ಒ	ಓ	ಔ	ಅಂ	ಅಃ
a	ā	i	ī	u	ū	ṛ	e	ē	ai	o	ō	au	aṃ	aḥ

क	ख	ग	घ	ञ
ಕ	ಖ	ಗ	ಘ	ಙ
ka	kha	ga	gha	ṅa

च	छ	ज	झ	ञ
ಚ	ಛ	ಜ	ಝ	ಞ
ca	cha	ja	jha	ña

ट	ठ	ड	ढ	ण
ಟ	ಠ	ಡ	ಢ	ಣ
ṭa	ṭha	ḍa	ḍha	ṇa

त	थ	द	ध	न
ತ	ಥ	ದ	ಧ	ನ
ta	tha	da	dha	na

प	फ	ब	भ	म
ಪ	ಫ	ಬ	ಭ	ಮ
pa	pha	ba	bha	ma

य	र	ल	व	श	ष	स	ह	ळ
ಯ	ರ	ಲ	ವ	ಶ	ಷ	ಸ	ಹ	ಳ
ya	ra	la	va	śa	ṣa	sa	ha	ḷa

Please note that unlike Sanskrit, Kannada has 1. e and ē and 2. o and ō. e should be pronounced as *e* as in p*e*t, s*e*t; ē should be pronounced as *a* as in l*a*te, r*a*te; o should be pronounced as *o* as in s*o*ciety, m*o*ron; ō should be pronounced as *o* as in cl*o*se, r*o*se.

^ ^ ^

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CORRECTIONS

All œ should be read as Ē wherever it occurs

Page and line		error	correct
v	5	by the	by
vi	25	graandson	grandson
8	10	upanaya	upanayana
46	last	pavitam	pavitram
47	17	it Brahman	Brahman
110	15	material	substantial
120	7	created	"created
122	28	(formless)	(formless),
141	last but 2	he	Basavaṇṇa
157	19	Vacanas	Vacana
170	10	3.He	He
172	last but 5	orinary	ordinary
185	21	arriVēd	arrived
187	5	heaven"[7].Hell	he means that hell
206	20	on	in
206	24-25	delete "(the author says)"	
214	last but 1	Kailāsa	Kailāsa[12]
265	fn 51	Ibid.1266	III. v.1266
268	fn 9.	v.39	v.260
268	fn 14.	v.37	v.375
269	fn. 2	v.741	v.747
274	fn 19	III	II
274	fn 19	v.148	v.127
278	6	iibid.v.438	Ibid.v.650
278	7	v.650	v.438

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CHAPTER ONE:

LIṄGĀYATISM AS AN INDEPENDENT RELIGION

Many people including some Liṅgāyats have believed that Liṅgāyatism is a branch of Śaivism which is itself a sect of Hinduism[1]. This has been questioned by many modern scholars ever since some British authors cited some important non-Vēdic elements in Liṅgāyatism. The British authors could not authenticate their opinion adequately, for the reason that they could not get all the relevant Kannada Vacanas which enshrine Liṅgāyatism. This remained so for many decades until the publication in 1922 and onwards of more than 22,000 Vacanas by scholars and researchers led by Dr.P.G.Halakatti. Many contemporary scholars who have leanings towards the theory of the non-Vēdic nature of Liṅgāyatism have revived the issue.

Originally, the term 'Hindu' was used by the ancient Persians to refer to the people living on the western bank of the River Sindhū (Indus). Later, the Greeks used the word 'India' to refer to the land of Indus. The Muslims who invaded and ruled India used the word 'Hindu' to refer to all the natives of India irrespective of their religions. Only the Europeans who ruled India made a classification of Indians on the basis of their religions like Hinduism, Jainism, Sikhism, Liṅgāyatism, Islam, etc.

The problem whether Liṅgāyatism is a sect of Hinduism is complex and cannot be solved easily unless the definition of Hinduism is determined. Over the years, this question has been complicated both by academic and non-academic people. There are people who argue that Hinduism is not a religion like Islam

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or Buddhism because it has no specific fixed beliefs and practices, while there are people who argue that Hinduism is not a religion but only a way of life (as if religion is not a way of life). Again, there are people who argue that Hinduism is a federation of religions, while there are people who argue that all religions that originated in India, including Buddhism, Jainism, Liṅgāyatism and Sikhism are branches of Hinduism. Dr.S.Radhakrishnan, for example, wrote that Buddha 'was born, grew up and died a Hindu'[2]. He wrote in *2500 Years of Buddhism* that "Buddha is the greatest Hindu". These words obliterate the distinction between Buddhism and Hinduism. What was the necessity, then one is forced to ask, for Hindus to drive away Buddhism from India? Recently, a politician went to the extent of declaring that all those who live in Hindustan (India) are Hindus, including Muslims, Pharsis, Christians, etc. These political stunts, instead of solving the issue, have only complicated it. For example, during the census a Christian or Muslim cannot declare that he be included in the column of Hinduism.

The best way of solving this problem is to follow the Indian philosophical tradition. Accordingly, a school of philosophy is orthodox or Vēdic if it conforms to the Vēdic authority and heterodox or non-Vēdic if it does not. On this basis the Indian philosophical tradition has categorised the six systems (Nyāya, Vaiśēṣika, Sāṅkhya, Yōga, Pūrva Mīmāṃsā and Vēdānta or Uttara Mīmāṃsā) as Vēdic, because they declare their allegiance to the Vēdas and Cārvāka, Jainism and Buddhism as non-Vēdic, because they categorically reject the Vēdic authority. In view of this model we will define that religion as Vedic or Hindu if it conforms to the Vedas and non-Hindu if it does not. So we reframe the question, "Are Liṅgāyats Vēdic or non-Vēdic?" (In this book 'Hinduism' and 'Vēdic religion' are used interchangeably). If the Vēdic authority is the determinant then there are good reasons for us to conclude that Liṅgāyatism cannot be a sect of Hinduism. The following are the reasons.

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1. VœDIC AUTHORITY

Religious scriptures are regarded as holy either because they are the source of rules and regulations which the followers have to follow, or because they are believed to be revealed by God or his messengers. Thus, the Bible for the Christians, the Quran for the Muslims and the Tripiṭakas for the Buddhists are Holy Scriptures. Similarly, the Vēdas which are the books of Vēdic theological doctrines and religious practices are the Holy Scriptures for the Hindus.

These scriptures are believed to carry unquestioned authority. If you ask a Muslim why he should pray five times a day his answer is that it is enjoined so in the Quran. Similarly, if you ask a Hindu why he should invite a Brahmin as a priest to perform a rite, or why he should perform certain sacrifices or rituals he would point to the Vēdas. In matters of metaphysical and religious controversies it is the Vēdas or their off-shoots, namely, Śāstras, Purāṇas, Āgamas, etc. that offer the final verdict and validate or invalidate our beliefs and doctrines. It is in this sense that the Vēdas are said to carry unquestioned authority. Technically, it is called Vēda-prāmāṇya (Vēda-cerfication). Those who accept the Vēdic authority are Hindus and the Buddhists, the Jainas and the Sikhs who reject the Vēdic authority are not Hindus (not Vēdic). The Supreme Court of India has given a judgment in 1966 that all those who accept the Vēdic authority are Hindus.

The Vacana composers of the twelfth century under the leadership of Basavaṇṇa have rejected the Vēdic authority in unambiguous terms. Basavaṇṇa has said that he would fight the Vēdas, hook the Śāstras, cut the nose of the Agamas[3]. Akka Mahādēvi has said that the Vēdas, the Purāṇas, the Śāstras, etc. are husk that remains after pounding paddy; why pound them again and again?[4] Similarly, Allama Prabhu denies authority to the Vēdas, Śāstras, etc[5].

Traditional Hinduism had accorded to the Vēdas and allied scriptures the status of God to prove their infallibility and inviolability. But Basavaṇṇa defied this and said that the Vēdas are not God, only Paraśiva is God[6]. Similarly, Siddharāma

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divests the Vēdas of divinity[7]. As the Vēdas, Śāstras, Purāṇas (1) tell lies shamelessly[8], (2) teach us to eat meat and drink intoxicants[9], (3) tell us to kill animals[10], (4) are only verbal acrobatics[11] and (5) cannot help in pleasing Paraśiva[12], the belief that they are divine is false; in fact, by performing the Vēdic sacrifices one surely goes to hell[13].

These statements unambiguously indicate that the Vacanakāras did not respect the Vēdas and the related scriptures.

2. POLYTHEISM

It is not merely the Vēdic authority, but the doctrines and practices that are enjoined in the Vēdic literature that are swept away. The Karma-kāṇḍa of the Vēdas advocates the belief in and worship of many gods and goddesses. It speaks of thirty-three crore gods of whom only thirty-three are important. It has classified them into celestial, atmospheric and terrestrial and of these Indra, Agni, Yama, Varuṇa, Mitra and Uṣas are important. The Upaniṣads derided both the Vēdic polytheism and performance of sacrifices in the name of gods and goddesses. In fact, at the end of the Ṛg Vēda it is declared that reality is one but the wise call it by many names. But the Upaniṣads also enjoined performance of sacrifices in the name of gods as a mark of Vēdic religion.

Liṅgāyats, on the contrary, are strict monotheists. They enjoin belief in and worship of only one God, Liṅga or Paraśiva, who is Sat (Reality), Cit (Consciousness), Ānanda (Bliss), Nitya (Eternal) and Paripūrṇa (All-pervasive), the omnipotent creator, maintainer and destroyer of the world and the impartial judge who awards punishment to the wicked and grace to the virtuous. God is described as being formless and also as assuming innumerable forms. However, it should be noted that the God of Liṅgāyatism, who is often called Śiva or Paraśiva, is not the same as Śiva of Hindu mythology. Therefore, the objection that as Liṅgāyats worship Śiva, who is a Hindu God, they must be regarded as Hindus holds no water. They are different from the Hindus just as Christians and Jews who worship the same God, Yehova, are different from each other.

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People worship many gods because they lose faith in one god when their selfish motive is not fulfilled, thus proving the close relation between selfishness and polytheism. Basavaṇṇa and his colleagues condemned polytheism considering it as equal to a wife's adultery[14].

3. PERFORMANCE OF SACRIFICES AND RITUALS

The feature inextricably associated with Vēdic polytheism is the performance of sacrifices and rituals to appease gods or goddesses with selfish motives. The modified versions of sacrifices do not, but the original versions did, involve sacrifices of animals like goats, horses, etc. Basavaṇṇa condemned this practice, not only for its selfish motives, but also for its violence to the animals. He argued that any religion which involves violence to others is not worth the name of religion[15]. He did not approve of the Vēdas for advocating such a religion, and founded a new religion, Liṅgāyatism, on the principle that the root of religion is compassion[16]. In fact, his compassion included not merely avoidance of animal sacrifice but welfare of all beings. In this he followed Buddha who said "And as for your saying that for the sake of dharma I should carry out the sacrificial ceremonies which are customary in my family and which bring the desired fruit, I do not approve of sacrifices for I do not care for happiness which is sought at the price of others' suffering"[17].

4. CASTE DISCRIMINATION

Caste discrimination is built into Vēdic religion. It has divided the society into many pieces, into Brahmins, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas, Śūdras and untouchables (and again, the Śūdras into many subsects) such that there is no inter-dining and inter-marriage among them. Indian history is replete with anecdotes of skirmishes between communities on the basis of sectarian feeling. Because of this division of the Hindus social and political unity was absent and foreign invaders took advantage of this.

The original classification of society on the basis of natural propensity of the individual might have been rational. Those who studied the Vēdas and performed the sacrifices

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became Brahmins; those who had the tendency to fight and rule the country became the Kṣatriyas; those who liked agriculture and trade became the Vaiśyas. Thus, it is said, of the many sons of a father some became Brahmins, some Kṣatriyas and some Vaiśyas. But the Śūdras were forced into slavery of the above three.

However, when at a later period the classification became hereditary, many evils followed. The Brahmins considered themselves socially most superior; the Kṣatriyas occupied the second rung and the Vaiśyas the third.

This classification was only among the Aryans and on the Dasyus who were called Śūdras service of the upper castes was imposed. Manu ruled later that Śūdra was created by God to do the servile work and while a Brahmin master could dismiss a Śūdra slave from his service, nobody could free a Śūdra from slavery (dāsya)[18].

We cannot categorise Liṅgāyats as Hindus, because as they do not wear the sacred thread they cannot be categorised as Brahmins, Kṣatrias or Vaiśyas. Nor are they categorised as Śūdras or Pañcamas because, unlike Śūdras and the Pañcamas (the untouchables), they have been learning and teaching Sanskrit and producing Sanskrit books since the time of Basavaṇṇa. Nor do they consider Brahmins as their priests, as they have their own priests, called Jaṅgamas.

Basavaṇṇa and his followers treated all Liṅgāyats as superior and equal, irrespective of their professions[19]. For them superiority or inferiority depended on man's religiousness, not on birth or profession. So Cennayya, Kakkayya, Kinnarayya and other low caste devotees deserved praise and Brahmins who observed caste system and killed animals in the name of religion deserved reproach[20].

One may object that Liṅgāyats also observe caste discrimination, that those belonging to Jaṅgama, Baṇajiga, Gāṇiga, potter and other castes do not inter-marry and that, therefore, they are not different from the Hindus. The objection is unfortunately true. What the Liṅgāyats are doing violates

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Basavaṇṇa's philosophical Liṅgāyatism. There are similar examples in other religions which incur similar objection. For example, Christians who distinguish between Brahmin Christians and untouchable Christians are clearly violating the Christianity of Jesus; but they do not cease to be Christians; similarly, the Liṅgāyats who observe caste system and other Hindu practices unknowingly, do not cease to be Liṅgāyats. We do not find today a single Liṅgāyat who practises all teachings of Basavaṇṇa. So it is worth recalling the saying, "There was only one true Christian and he died on the cross".

In this context two unfortunate incidents that took place in the last century must be mentioned. 1. In the first quarter of the last century some Liṅgāyats in order to keep for themselves the authority of worshipping Liṅga in a temple went to court of law to prove that they are Liṅgī-brahmins. They produced fake Sanskrit books in support of their claim. They even won the case to show that they, like Brahmins, have the right to worship in temples. 2. Early in the 1990s the five pontiffs of Guru Pīṭhas who call themselves higher than those of the Virakta pīṭhas wrote a letter to the then President of India requesting him to classify the Jaṅgama caste as one of the scheduled tribes. Both of these are clear violations of Liṅgāyatism of Basavaṇṇa.

5. DISCRIMINATION OF PROFESSION

The Vēdic tradition identified caste with profession, such that a man born in a particular family had to stick to the profession of his family or caste. On this count performance of sacrifices and rituals, studying and teaching of the Vēdas was considered the noblest profession of Brahmins and the Brahmins who did it were the most superior in the society; the Śūdra who worked in the farms of Vaiśyas and produced food grains was lower in the social hierarchy; and the cobbler who dealt with tanning the hide, etc. was the lowest. Kṛṣṇa declared in the *Bhagavadgītā* that one should not do other's profession though he can do it more perfectly[21]. Basavaṇṇa did not ask his followers to change their professions but only advised them to maintain the equality of all professions. Uriliṅga Peddi argued that while both acrobatics and performance of sacrifice are

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aimed at earning livelihood considering the former as inferior to the latter is baseless and irrational[22]. Some Śaraṇas went to the extent of arguing that a profession done honestly and with the intention of doing Dāsōha is itself worship or a noble profession[23].

6. GENDER DISCRIMINATION

Women have been ill treated by the Vēdic tradition. In the *Brahmasūtra* (I.iii, 34-38) Śūdras are barred from study of the Vēdas for the reason that they do not undergo the sacred thread wearing ceremony (upanaya-saṃskāra). Since study of the Vēdas is a qualification for Mōkṣa the Śūdras are barred from spiritual training which leads to Mōkṣa. Though there is no textual proof to the denial to women of the right of wearing sacred thread or performance of the Vēdic rituals contextual evidences prove that they are ineligible for both as they are defiled every month (by menstruation). Unfortunately, the Jainas also have held that woman cannot have liberation and to attain liberation she has to be reborn as man in her next birth.

Basavaṇṇa extended to women the right of performance of worship and eligibility to Mōkṣa. In order that they fulfil their desire for Mōkṣa he offered Iṣṭa-liṅga to them, as also to the Śūdras and the Pañcamas (the fifth caste or the caste of untouchables). As a result, many low caste people like potters, weavers, oil extractors, daily wagers, cobblers, farmers, etc. converted to Liṅgāyatism. Rejecting the Vēdic argument that menstruation disqualifies women for spiritual pursuits the Liṅgāyats insisted that women should worship Iṣṭa-liṅga even during their menstrual period.

7. ĀŚRAMA-DHARMA

According to the Vēdic tradition, a man's life is divided into four āśramas (stages), namely, brahmacarya, gṛhastha, vānaprastha and sanyāsa. In the first stage man has to learn the Vēdas and his profession; in the second he has to marry and set up a family; in the third he has to transfer his responsibilities to his sons and retire to a forest and in the last he has to renounce

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the world completely in favour of spiritual pursuits. Vēdic tradition has always upheld the last stage as superior to the rest. This, however, applies only to the first three higher castes, not to Śūdras and untouchables. It is said that when a Śūdra was found performing meditation he was killed by Śrī Rāma, because performance of meditation was not the duty of a Śūdra.

Liṅgāyatism rejected both the principles. It held that one need not go to forest and develop the attitude of life-negation and world-negation for achieving spiritual goal. One can execute one's family and social responsibilities and yet be spiritually oriented. All the associates of Basavaṇṇa (except Siddharāma) were married or householders. This is in accordance with the principle that Śiva and women are not antagonistic. Gajēśa Masaṇayya's spouse asks, "They say that one has to appease Śiva by abstaining from woman; why? Are woman and God opposite?"[24]. Similarly, she rejects the idea that to appease Śiva one should renounce senses and the world. One should abstain from others' wives, not one's own. Basavaṇṇa notes that if one suppresses his sensual desires, the senses will haunt him. In fact, it is unwarranted as Siriyāḷa and Ceṅgaḷe, couple, who were great Śiva-devotees, did not renounce conjugal bliss[25]. He advises that to keep the body and mind healthy one must enjoy all that comes to his lot as Prasāda of Liṅga[26]. His stand is a real golden mean between total asceticism and stark hedonism.

Though most of his associates and followers of Basavaṇṇa were Śūdras and Pañcamas converted to Liṅgāyatism, they were also encouraged to perform meditation after the Iṣṭa-liṅga-worship and this must have irritated the traditional minds.

8. TEMPLE CULT AND PRIEST-CRAFT

Hinduism advocates both sacrifices and idol worship in temples performed by specially trained priests and not by others. It is said that even if the king knew the procedures of performing sacrifices and rituals and the related Mantras, he should not, but only Kula-purōhita (royal priest) should,

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perform them. As the performance resulted in economic and other benefits to the priests, they did not allow others to do it, citing Śāstras which they had themselves written. Basavaṇṇa noticed two evils attached to it.

1. The devotee who wants to express his devotion is not allowed to worship and the priest who does not have any devotional attitude worships on behalf of the devotee. It is, in the words of Basavaṇṇa, like someone who is hungry asking someone else to eat on his behalf[27]. The devotee has to stand at a distance to watch the priest worship. Basavaṇṇa insisted that one who wants to express his devotion (bhakti) should not go to temples and should himself worship his/her Iṣṭa-liṅga at any time or place of his convenience. It is easily noticeable that one who actually worships his deity derives a better satisfaction than watch others worship on his behalf.

2. Another defect noticed by Basavaṇṇa is that performance of sacrifices involves selfish motive; worship in temples involves dualism of the priest (or the devotee) and God. According to Basavaṇṇa and his colleagues, the devotee is himself God and the human body is itself temple. One who ignores this and worships God externally is not a Liṅgāyat.

9. PILGRIMAGE

Liṅgāyats hold that since the soul is itself Liṅga (God) and that one's own body is temple they need not visit pilgrimage centres. The Hindus believe that rivers and ponds of the pilgrimage centres are holy and the devotees who bathe in them are sanctified. Siddharāma ridiculing this belief argues that in that case, millions of marine creatures in the River Ganga which has been flowing for thousands of miles for millions of years must all go to the divine world and that it is false that it is meant only for gods[28].

10. SŪTAKAS (IMPURITIES)

The traditional Hindus observe the five Sūtakas (impurities) very vigilantly. These are as follows. Janana-sūtaka (impurity of birth): When a woman gives birth she becomes impure such that she should not touch others and others should

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not touch her; nor should she touch articles of worship like idols of gods, bell, rosaries, etc., until she takes purificatory bath and observes related rites. Jāti(kula)-sūtaka (impurity of caste): if one belonging to a higher caste touches a Śūdra or untouchable accidentally, he/she becomes impure. The touch incurs certain measures of atonement like bath, worship, donation, feeding the Brahmins, etc. Inter-dining and inter-marriage are strictly prohibited. But Basavaṇṇa defied this and mixed with all Śūdras and Pañcamas[29]. Rajas-sūtaka (impurity of menstruation): a woman in her menstruation period is impure and should live in the exteriors of the house for three days. During the period she and others should not touch each other. She becomes pure again after she takes purificatory bath. But Cennabasavaṇṇa says that wearing of Iṣṭa-liṅga keeps her pure always. Prēta-sūtaka (impurity of corpse): Death causes impurity. The members of the house and their relatives of the dead cannot eat or drink until the funeral rites are completed. Till then they cannot enter other's house, touch others or be touched by others. Eñjalu-sūtaka: (impurity of orts): The Kannada word 'eñjalu' literally means saliva. This sūtaka means that if some eatable or drink touches the lips it becomes impure and unfit for other's consumption and for offering to God.

Liṅgāyats reject the observance of these sūtakas on the ground that once a man or woman wears Iṣṭa-liṅga on his/her person he/she becomes so holy that nothing can defile him/her. Those Liṅgāyats who observe the Sūtakas are condemned[30].

If a Muslim rejects the principles of Quran he cannot be called a Muslim. Similarly, if a Hindu rejects the principles of the Vēdas he cannot be called a Hindu or a man of Vēdic religion. From this it follows necessarily that Liṅgāyats who reject the Vēdas cannot be Hindus.

Moreover, the Liṅgāyats having rejected the Vēdas created their own literature, called Vacanas and having rejected the Vēdic theology and practices they evolved their own theology and set of practices.

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One may object that Liṅgāyats have rejected the Karma-kāṇḍa of the Vēdas and accept their Jñāna-kāṇḍa. That is true. The Jainas and the Buddhists also accept the doctrines of the Jñāna-kāṇḍa (Upaniṣads), that the soul is different from the physical body; that it is subject to rebirth and Karma, Avidyā is the source of bondage and knowledge is the means to Mōkṣa, that Mōkṣa is freedom from rebirth, etc. Yet they are regarded as different from Hindus because they reject the Karma-kāṇḍa of the Vēdas. If rejection of the Karma-kāṇḍa is the reason why Buddhists, Jainas and others are regarded as non-Hindus, for the same reason Liṅgāyats are to be regarded as non-Hindus.

11. CONVERSION

The concept of religious conversion is unknown to Hinduism. Hinduism and caste system go together such that if one claims that he is a Hindu he means that he belongs to one of the five castes of Hinduism, namely, Brahmin, Kṣatriya, Vaiśya, Śūdra and Pañcama. The five castes of Hinduism are watertight compartments and nobody can move from any one to any other. This really means that one born in his caste cannot change his profession. For example, if one is born in potter's caste, he cannot take up the profession of a Brahmin, namely, Vēdic studies and performance of Vēdic rites. In fact, the Vēdic religion encourages its followers to maintain the purity of castes. By ascribing the statement to Kṛṣṇa that he made four-fold classification on the basis of people's choice and natural propensity and that people should perform only the duties prescribed to their castes and not the duties prescribed to other castes, the Vēdic culture prohibited inter-dining and inter-marrying among the five castes. Marriage between different castes is called Varṇa-saṅkara (caste-mixing) and those involved in it are cast into hell.

Conversion to Hinduism is as impossible as conversion from one caste to another. Either one is a Hindu by birth or one is not a Hindu. It is unthinkable that non-Hindus can convert to Hinduism. When it is in principle impossible, conversion of a non-Hindu to Hinduism naturally gives rise to the question, 'To which caste should he belong'? There cannot be an

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appropriate answer to this question. Being non-Vēdic Liṅgāyatism opened its doors to all castes and religions. Or, by opening its doors to all castes and religions it became non-Vēdic. It is a well known fact that by offering Iṣṭa-liṅga to all those who wanted to become Liṅgāyats Basavaṇṇa converted people of not only Vēdic castes including Brahmins but also Jainas.

Brothers, some Vaiṣṇavas abandoning their Viṣṇu became devotees of Liṅga;

Brothers, many Jainas gave up their Jaina religion and became devotees of Liṅga;

Brothers, many twice-born gave up their (Vēdic) rites and became Śiva-devotee; . . .[31]

It is noteworthy that the twice-born gave up their castes along with their profession. This is emphasised because one cannot be a Liṅgāyat and adhere to the Vēdas, at the same time.

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CHAPTER TWO:

SOURCE MATERIAL AND WRITERS

A. VACANAS

From the discussion in the previous chapter one can infer that the claim of some scholars that the Vēdas and Āgamas are the sources of Liṅgāyatism is false. For any fruitful, authentic and complete study of Liṅgāyatism, we have to depend on the Kannada Vacanas (sayings) of pioneers like Basavaṇṇa, Allama Prabhu, Cennabasavaṇṇa, etc. and those of later writers.

Though Vacana can be described as a special type of prose, it should be rightly regarded as a harmonious blend of prose and poetry: in many cases it has the simplicity and clarity of prose and rhyme and beauty of poetry, though not bound by rules of prosody[1]. The fact that the Vacanas are also called 'gīta' or 'gīta-mātu' allows us to infer that some of them were sung, set to tunes (rāgas) of classical music. Yet they were not strictly poems.

Basavaṇṇa, Allama Prabhu, Cennabasavaṇṇa, Akka Mahādēvi and others who had great poetic prowess could have produced great literary works. But in such a case, their works would reach only a few, and, as a result, their mission would be fated to fail. Basavaṇṇa, the founder, and the early exponents of Liṅgāyatism chose neither Sanskrit nor rule-bound form of Kannada poetry to express their teachings, as their followers were mostly farmers, potters, weavers, cobblers, oil extractors, basket-makers, etc. who were unlettered. Obviously, they chose the simple, easily understandable Kannada, their mother tongue. Their Kannada Vacanas deeply influenced and encouraged

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others to follow them. As a result, some of the Vacanakāras (Vacana-composers) not only reformed their own lives, but also wrote Vacanas to teach their friends and relatives to reform their lives.

This freedom to express in Kannada prose opened the flood gates for many people to release their pent up emotions in the form of Vacanas. The result is astounding – around 360 Vacanakāras, including more than 30 women Vacana-composers produced Vacanas. There were upper caste people in it, like Basavaṇṇa and Cennabasavaṇṇa and low caste people like Allama Prabhu, Mādāra Cennayya, Maḍivāḷa (washerman) Mācayya, Okkaliga (farmer) Muddaṇṇa, to name a few. For the first time in the history of the world, so many people wrote together, as if they were constructing a new road; for the first time in the history of the world potters, carpenters, prostitutes, weavers, cobblers, etc. joined hands in the production of Vacana literature. Of the nearly 22000 Vacanas extant now, nearly 12000 were written during Basava's time; the rest were written after 15th century (many are still writing).

Another reason why Basavaṇṇa and others chose Vacanas as a medium of expression is that they found Vacanas more convenient than the rule-bound poems for placing their arguments to condemn the rival stand and propose their own.

The Vacanakāras totally deviated from the earlier poets who chose to flatter the kings and queens who patronized them. They chose to write about nothing but religion, philosophy, ethics, mysticism and life history of the Śaraṇas. Their writings aimed at reforming lives of the people. The primary aim of the writers of Vacanas, according to Dr.Nandimath, is not to propound a religious or philosophical system, but to reveal the existing social and religious evils[2]. The following pages (and the previous chapter) will prove Dr. Nandimath wrong.

After Bijjaḷa's assassination, Basavaṇṇa and his aides went in different directions along with the bundles of Vacanas and perhaps many Vacanas were destroyed by the traditional minds.

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Among the leading influential Vacanakāras we will mention only a few.

1. BASAVAṆṆA

Basavaṇṇa, (also called Basava, Saṅgana Basava, Basavarāja, Basavēśvara, etc.), the founder and leader of the Liṅgāyat movement, is the eternal sun shining in the Liṅgāyat firmament. By his magnanimous personality he has endeared himself to all his contemporary Vacanakāras and the later followers, poets and writers. He has been praised wholeheartedly by the Vacanakāras and is the hero of many later Kannada poetic works. Today his admirers' number is growing by leaps and bounds. Unfortunately, from the available data it is difficult to reconstruct a fairly reasonable life history of Basavaṇṇa. His colleagues certainly believed him to be the founder, a social reformer, devout Śiva-devotee, compassionate, yet courageous and virile fighter. But the post-Basava poets' choice of mythological rather than historical language fails to reveal the real facts about him.

Setting aside the hyperboles and miracles attached to his life, we can still say something nearly historical about him. While the stone inscription of Arjunavāḍa mentions Mādarasa as Basavaṇṇa's father, Gaṅgāmbe (Basavaṇṇa's wife) in her Vacana adds the name of Mādalāmbike as his mother[3]. These names seem to be accepted by others like Ghaṭṭivāḷayya, Maḍivāḷa Mācayya, etc. All of them are agreed that the parents were Śaiva Brahmins who lived in Bāgevāḍi, a small village, now in Bagalkote District of Karnataka. As was the custom, the mother gave birth to her son in her parents' house in Iṅgaḷēśvara, a nearby village. About his birth date there is no unanimity among the biographers. Many believe that he was born in 1131, whereas Dr. P.B.Desai, a famous historian, taking into consideration the Hindu calendar cited in the Purāṇas and Basavaṇṇa's achievements, concludes that he must have been born before 1106 and that he must have lived for more than sixty years. Most scholars are agreed that he died in 1167.

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Basavaṇṇa had two wives; the first, Gaṅgāmbikā, was the daughter of Bijjaḷa's minister Baladēva and the second, Nīlāmbikā, the adopted sister of Bijjaḷa[4]. He had an elder brother, Dēvarāja and a son who died very young. Nāgamma was his elder sister.

According to Harihara[5], when Basavaṇṇa, then 16, realized that Vēdic ritualism and unswerving devotion cannot go together, he tore off his sacred thread, the symbol of Brahminism and with Nāgamma came to Kūḍalasaṅgama, which is on the bank of the confluence of River Kṛṣṇā and River Malaprabhā. He studied the Vēdas, the Upaniṣads, the Āgamas and the Purāṇas, under some teacher, and also daily worshipped Liṅga installed there.

Basavaṇṇa came to Maṅgaḷavēḍhe (now in Maharashtra) (1132?) to work as an accountant in the treasury of Bijjaḷa, who was then a petty chieftain under the King Tailapa III. When Bijjaḷa got killed Tailapa III and usurped the throne in 1162, he made Kalyāṇa (now called Basava Kalyāṇa in Bidar District, Karnataka) his capital. Basavaṇṇa went with him and also moved up, from the position of an accountant to that of a finance minister.

Basavaṇṇa's revolt against the traditional socio-religious set up must have originated while he was in Maṅgaḷavēḍhe and gained strength in Kalyāṇa. He must have observed closely the difference between the sublime ideals and disgusting facts, between the lofty teachings of Advaita and the inhuman treatment of the Śūdras and the untouchables by the upper castes, discrimination between man and woman, the silent suffering of the ignorant lower castes, etc. He must have certainly noticed how the Brahmins misused their literacy and ignorance of the lower castes. The more he noticed the likes of such, the more he hated the Vēdic socio-religious system, particularly, the Brahmin primacy. Many of his Vacanas are a testimony to this. When he tore off his sacred thread he freed himself from the ritualistic Vēdism; when he founded Liṅgāyatism he freed the suffering low castes from Vēdism.

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He seems to have incurred the wrath of the traditional minds who were his colleagues for the following reasons. 1. He established Anubhava-maṇṭapa in which people of all castes, including the Śūdras and the untouchables and of both genderes participated to discuss metaphysics, religion, morality, spiritual experience, Kāyaka and Dāsōha, aim of life, etc. This is in opposition to Manu who had ordained that spiritual matters must not be imparted to the Śūdras. 2. Basavaṇṇa made Allama Prabhu, a Śūdra by caste, the president. 3. Allama, Basavaṇṇa, Cennabasavaṇṇa and others openly revealed the irrationalism of the Vēdic polytheism, casteism, ritualism and stratification of society; they taught their followers the anti-Vēdic doctrines of Liṅgāyatism and asked them to propagate them. Their new religious and social philosophy attracted many people to Kalyāṇa, people not only from different parts of Karnataka, but from Afghanistan, Kashmir, Saurashtra, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu and Andhra. Basavaṇṇa's continuously growing popularity engendered jealousy among other ministers. 4. His mission to abolish caste discrimination and conversion of lower castes to Liṅgāyatism culminated in the marriage of a Brahmin girl with an untouchable boy. Ill-advised and forced by the traditionalists, Bijjaḷa, it seems, exiled Basavaṇṇa, and, getting gouged the eyes of the fathers of Brahmin girl and untouchable boy, got them pulled by the elephants along the streets till their death. The enemies of Bijjaḷa, who were waiting in the side wings found this an opportune moment to kill Bijjaḷa and to drive away all the Vacanakāras. We do not know how the Vacanakāras died, where and when. Perhaps, Basavaṇṇa died in Kūḍala Saṅgama in A.D.1167 before Bijjaḷa (A.D.1168).

2. CENNABASAVAṆṆA

Cennabasavaṇṇa, the only son of Basava's elder sister, Nāgamma, was a stout supporter of whatever Basavaṇṇa thought and did. Without his physical and moral support, perhaps, Basavaṇṇa would not have propagated his ideas easily. Though he was far younger than all his colleagues, few could excel him in knowledge of the Vēdas, the Upaniṣads, the Śāstras, the Āgamas and the Purāṇas. He played a major role in

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propagating Basavaṇṇa's new religion and new social philosophy.

We remember Cennabasava for four reasons. 1. It is he who for the first time expounded Basavaṇṇa's theories and practices and rationally supported them. 2. It is he who formulated the rules of an ideal life of a Liṅgāyat, i.e., of worship, devotion, etc. Based on the suggestions of Basavaṇṇa's Vacanas, he has penned more Vacanas on Prasāda than anybody else. 3. He formulated the moral codes of an ideal Liṅgāyat. 4. He also formulated rules of social behaviour of Liṅgāyats.

Cennabasavaṇṇa, like Basavaṇṇa, did not believe in world-negation. A Śaraṇa should discharge his social responsibilities and yet live spiritual life leading to Mōkṣa. His way of life may not please others, as others' way of life does not please him[6].

In addition to the Vacanas '*Karaṇa-hasuge*' is the special contribution of Cennabasava in which he gives an analysis of the human body. He speaks of how the elements, the airs, the senses, etc. behave and make man worldly. Knowledge of this is necessary for a seeker, so that from an eminent guide he should learn the way of subduing them in order to move towards the highest goal, union with Liṅga.

When Allama Prabhu went out of Kalyāṇa for twelve years, Cennabasavaṇṇa was made the president of Anubhava-maṇṭapa, as he was very good in knowledge and wisdom like Allama Prabhu. According to the popular belief, after the revolution in Kalyāṇa he along with his trusted friends went to Uḷavi (Uttarra Kannada District of Karnataka) and lived there till the end of his life. The group is believed to have carried with it a large number of Vacana bundles in order to save them from the enemies.

3. ALLAMA PRABHU

Allama, recognized as one of the greatest mystics of the world and one of the greatest poets of Kannada literature, is the hero of Harihara's *Prabhudēvara Ragaḷe* and Cāmarasa's

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Prabhuliṅga-līle. He was born in Baḷḷigāvi, a small village, now in Shivamogga District of Karnataka. He was a Naṭṭuva (a Śūdra) whose profession was dançe-teaching. His father taught dance to the royal family. Allama had inherited from his father and mastered the art of playing on Mṛdaṅga (or Maddale) a percussion instrument, used as accompaniment in classical dance. According to Harihara (c.1250) and Cāmarasa (c. 1450), the young and handsome Allama was one day playing on it in the temple at Banavāsi when a dancing girl, who listened to it fell for him. She was the daughter of a rich merchant, according to Harihara, married/lived with him and died in a few years of terminal fever. Unable to withstand the grief Allama, it seems, was devastated for some time. Later he transformed his worldly love to spiritual love. Perhaps, Animiśa initiated him to Liṅgāyatism. According to his own Vacanas, which exude poetic excellence, he reached the greatest spiritual height that no other Liṅgāyat scaled. Perhaps, when he met Basavaṇṇa he was already a famous mystic.

According to Cāmarasa, the girl, the daughter of a chieftain, was a personification of Māyā sent from Kailāsa by Pārvatī, spouse of Śiva, to tempt Allama to worldliness. But Allama who was already a great mystic had overcome temptations of all kinds. Cāmarasa even goes to extent of describing Allama as having no physical body, but only an ethereal body (vyōma-kāya) such that Māyā could not succeed in having bodily contact with him.

From his own Vacanas we can unambiguously conclude that Allama had great disdain for religious formalism and exhibitionism and condemned people's concepts of worship, meditation, living, and even their concept of the end of life, as they were spiritually futile. Allama had the magnanimity of guiding the spiritually erring practitioners. When, for example, he noticed Siddharāma's altruistic work with a view to attaining Kailāsa as the reward, he did not approve of it and brought him to Kalyāṇa so that he should learn the right way to liberation from the Śaraṇas there. At the same time he was silently noticing Basavaṇṇa's social and religious reformations.

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Under the presidentship of Allama Prabhu people discussed spiritual matters in Anubhava Maṇṭapa and the people without caste and gender discrimination attended it.

His philosophy can be summed up as follows. Every living being is a possible God. But man because of his innate ignorance thinks that he is separate from God, and believing that God is elsewhere goes on searching for him. He lives a worldly life that leads to series of worldly rebirths in each of which he suffers. If an efficient Guru teaches about his real nature and the way to realize it he can free himself from all the suffering and live an eternal and blissful life. In fact, the realization that he is God is itself the greatest teacher that compels him to take up spiritual life.

4. SIDDHARĀMA

If a man purely by his self-effort scales great spiritual heights and is called a great Śiva-yōgi, to our ancient Kannada poets he looks like a man of miracles sent by God. Then the poets to show his poetical skill interpolate into his life history as many miracles as possible. This applies to the ordinary shepherd boy called Dhūḷi Mākāḷa, who was later known as Siddharāma, 'the Śiva-yōgi, yōgi of yōgis'[7]. As a result, we see in Siddharāma's life history more hyperboles, unnatural descriptions and miracles than historical facts.

More than 20 stone inscriptions have been unearthed about Siddharāma in and around Sonnalige (modern Sholapur of Maharashtra) which go to prove that he was born and lived for some time in Sonnalige which was a small Kannada speakers' village 850 years ago (now it is a bustling business city populated by more Marathi speaking people). Siddharāma belonged to the caste of Kuḍiyas; his mother was Suggavve and father Muddugauḍa. The couple had no issues for a long time. One day Rēvaṇasiddha, a great saint, came to Sonnalige with his disciples and foretold them that they were going get a great Yōgi as a son. He advised them to name their son Siddharāma. He also predicted that Sonnalige would become a great pilgrim centre.

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As predicted by Rēvaṇasiddha, after a few months Suggavve delivered a baby boy and the parents named him Dhūḷi Mākāḷa, after their family deity. But if he was called Mākāḷa the boy would not respond but would, if he was called Siddharāma. The boy never wept, spoke or smiled - in fact, exhibited no marks that would please the parents.

The father found him unintelligent and asked him to look after his cattle thinking that he was unfit for anything else. After breakfast the boy would take the cattle to nearby forest for grazing. One day he found a Liṅga installed under a tree, near a lake surrounded by trees and flowering climbers. Śiva-devotion was innate in him. Soon after reaching the place he would allow the cattle to graze and was engaged in the worship of the Liṅga.

One day, so goes the story, Śiva appeared in the form of a Jaṅgama called Mallayya (another name for Mallikārjuna, God of Śrī Śaila) and asked the boy for gruel mixed with buttermilk. The boy ran home to bring the food and when he returned to the spot the Jaṅgama had already left. He began to search for him, calling his name 'Mallayyā', loudly, frantically and repeatedly. Some Śrī Śaila-bound pilgrims who noticed his desperate calls promised him out of compassion to show Mallayya if he joined them. He went with them to Śrī Śaila, but when they showed the Liṅga installed in the temple, he was disappointed (there is a suggestion here that the stone image is not God Mallayya or Mallikārjuna). He was deeply frustrated and began to search for Mallayya in the mountains and planes and chasms. When he was painfully certain that he might not see him he decided to commit suicide by jumping into a chasm. But Mallayya saved him from death and asked him to go back to Sonnalige and he would join him later.

Perhaps the poet has forgotten to state that while Siddharāma lived in Śrī Śaila he studied the Vēdas, the Purāṇa, the Āgamas, etc. which he quotes on several occasions in his Vacanas and the Trividhis (triplets). Perhaps, he was a youth when he returned to Sonnalige.

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Soon after his return, Siddharāma with the help of his elder brother Bommayya built a temple for God Mallikārjuna with the intention of saving devotees the trouble of travelling to Śrī Śaila. He also installed idols of many gods and goddesses in the temple complex. He made financial and other arrangements for the daily performance of the Vēdic sacrifices and rituals. From this we can infer that he was a Vēdic polytheist.

Siddharāma decided to do good to all living beings. He gave away in charity buffaloes, cows, food, clothes, land, etc. He was engaged in altruistic works like building roads, water tanks, free kitchens and water-sheds for travellers.

Siddharāma was a great Yōgi. He states that Śiva intended him to be born in the mortal world in order to save people from worldly misery. We may dismiss the divine element in his statement and note that he was compassionate to all living beings. His Yōga was a synthesis of Bhakti (devotion), Karma (action) and Jñāna (knowledge). What was the end of his Yōga? In one of his Vacanas we find this answer: "O God, those who worship you cannot miss the eightfold fortune including wealth"[8]. This means both his devotion and altruistic works are selfish acts. Our conclusion is further fortified that he was engaged in the Vēdic sacrifices which were obviously selfish and that by means of devotion and altruistic acts he wanted to go to heaven and enjoy the celestial bliss there[9].

On his way back from North India Allama met Siddharāma and intending to put him on the right spiritual path he brought him to Kalyāṇa. On arriving at Kalyāṇa Siddharāma got initiated into Liṅgāyatism and learnt many new ideas and ideals from the Śaraṇas there. He became a monotheist and gave up the Vēdic ritualism. He replaced his old idea that Mōkṣa is a continued life in Kailāsa, a post mortem attainment, with the Liṅgāyat concept that it is unitive life with Liṅga in the embodied state and held that embodied union with Liṅga is better than union after death. He even ridicules Kailāsa as a desert mountain and Śiva abiding there as a moron[10]. He realized that many of

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his practices were based not on reason but on faith and repented of that[11]. That he was drawn away from the Vēdas is proved by his own Vacanas[11]. But unfortunately, Rāghavāṅka in his *Siddharāma-cāritra* has tried to prove that Siddharāma even after returning from Kalyāṇa was still a Vēdic polytheist and ritualist.

5. AKKA MAHĀDœVI

Akka Mahādēvi was born in Uḍutaḍi in the present Shivamogga District of Karnataka. Born in a spiritual milieu she had decided even while she was young to marry none other than Śiva. At sixteen she was a very beautiful girl. When one day the Jaina king Kauśika saw her, he was so much infatuated by her beauty that he immediately decided to marry her. But she rejected his proposal. Fearing evil consequences her parents advised her to accept the proposal. Mahādēvi accepted the proposal on the condition that he should not disturb her spiritual activities and a breach would result in divorce. Kauśika who was fascinated by her beauty agreed to this. But his conjugal lust came in the way of her spiritual activities and the marriage ended tragically. She left the house leaving behind not only the jewels and other luxuries, but the costly clothes, including the ones she was wearing. The poets say 'She left the palace with her body covered by her long tresses' (kēśāmbara). But the word 'kēśāmbara' refers to coarse woollen rug also, which the world over is accepted as the symbol of renunciation.

Harihara says in his *Mahādēviyakkagaḷa Ragaḷe*[12] that Mahādēvi worshipped Liṅga on her palm. But her Śiva-faith was different from Basavaṇṇa's Liṅgāyatism. She was not wearing Liṅga on her person as was required by Liṅgāyatism. For Basavaṇṇa Liṅga is in us in the form of our soul while Akka Mahādēvi believes that Śiva is other than our soul. On one occasion she says that her wrong belief that Liṅga was far was the cause of her unhappiness[13]. Her disdainful attitude to the Vēdic religion was influenced by the Śaraṇas.

Akka Mahādēvi believed that God (whom she called Cenna Mallikārjuna) was omnipresent and would take care of

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her daily needs, like food, water, bed or company[14]. Her Vacanas are full of agony of a lover who is separated from her beloved, Śiva, and of undiminished yearning for marriage with him. Perhaps, she had frequently enjoyed mystic ecstasy and this made her yearn more for it.

She, like most other Śaraṇas, dislikes renouncing society in favour of secluded life in a forest[15]. According to the *Śūnya-sampādane* she went to Śrī Śaila to spend the rest of her spiritual life there.

6. TŌṆṬADA SIDDHALIṄGA ŚIVAYŌGI

Tōṇṭada Siddhaliṅga Śivayōgi is regarded as a great name in the post-Basava period of Liṅgāyatism, for three reasons. He shows immense zeal in propagating the mission of Basavaṇṇa. After nearly 250 years it is he who revived Vacana-writing. He is the first to choose south Karnataka as his field of propagation. But unfortunately, such a great author's history is shrouded in mystery. That he was born in Haradanahaḷḷi (Chamarajanagara District, Karnataka) is certain, while his date of birth, names of the parents, childhood history, etc. are in dark. It seems that when he was very young he met Gōsala Cennabsavēśvara, the pontiff of the Maṭha (monastery) at Haradanahaḷḷi, who ordained him as the next pontiff and gave him a new name 'Siddhaliṅga'. The boy must have studied the Upaniṣads, Āgamas, Purāṇas, etc.

Later he became a great mystic and was popularly called 'Tōṇṭada Siddhaliṅga Śivayōgi' and, sometimes, 'Eḍeyūru Siddhaliṅga'. In his journey he once halted in Keggere, Tumkur district of Karnataka and stayed in a disciple's coconut grove, before he was formally invited into the village. Then a small war broke out and the people fled the village. By the time they returned after six months a great ant-hill had grown around the meditating Siddhaliṅga. Immediately he became famous as 'Tōṇṭada Śivayōgi' as he was staying in the 'tōṇṭa' (grove). Soon he gained as many as 700 disciples and followers. With his group of disciples and followers he visited many places of

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south and north India. In his last days he stayed in Eḍeyūru where he died. Therefore, he is also known as Eḍeyūru Siddhaliṅga Śivayōgi.

As a mystic and Vacanakāra he had gained many disciples who wrote eulogizing works about him of which Śāntēśa's *Siddhēśvara-purāṇa* (1561) and Suvvi Malla's *Siddhēśvara-sāṅgatya* (1600) are regarded as important. These works help us to determine Siddhaliṅga's age. It is certain that he lived from the end of the 15th century to the middle of the 16th century.

Tōṇṭada Siddhaliṅga Śivayōgi has written *Ṣaṭ-sthala-jñāna-sārāmṛta* consisting of 701 Vacanas with his signature, "Mahāliṅga Guru Śiva Siddhēśvara Prabhu". He has devoted more Vacanas for dealing with creation than others.

Besides these there are many more Vacana composers, numbering at least 350, including 35 women. Among them those who draw our attention are Ambigara Cauḍayya, Mōḷige Mārayya, Jēḍara Dāsimayya, Uliriliṅga Dēva and his disciple, Uriliṅga Peddi, Nageya Māritande, Arivina Māritande, untouchables like Mādāra Cennayya, women Vacana-composers like, Satyakka, Akkamma, Mōḷige Mahādēvi, etc. Their Vacanas may not carry literary value. It is noteworthy that most of these Vacana-composers, especially, people of low caste, including women, have protested courageously, loudly and in unison against the injustice perpetrated against them by the tradition; they have also contributed their own mite, however small, to the doctrinal development of Liṅgāyatism. Some examples are as follows.

Basavaṇṇa's doctrine of Kāyaka-Dāsōha was further developed by the authors of *Śūnya-sampādane*. His idea that the irrational observance of vows is not real religion and real religion can be practised without them was developed by Akkamma. Jēḍara Dāsimayya, believed to be a senior contemporary of Basavaṇṇa, notes that the difference between man and woman lies only in bodies, not in souls. The sacred thread a Brahmin wears and the stick an untouchable holds are

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accidents, not innate. Both these statements mean that the caste discrimination is man-made and irrational. Mācayya, a washerman, refused to wash the clothes of non-Liṅgāyats, including those of king Bijjaḷa. Ferryman Cauḍayya declares that it is foolish to conceive Śiva in anthropomorphic or in mythological garb. He hates people who do not sacrifice anything of their own but only water, flower etc. to God in the form of worship. Mōḷige Mārayya, a king who abandoning his kingdom came to Kalyāṇa from Kashmir chose poverty to royalty and spiritual life to worldly life and earned his livelihood by selling firewood. Mārayya had resolved not to depend on any human. Rāmaṇṇa has written Vacanas which look simple but are full of hidden meaning. The fact that he was only a cowherd suggests that the Śaraṇas of the twelfth century must have been seriously busy educating people.

Madhuvayya (Madhuvarasa), a Brahmin by birth, was converted to Liṅgāyatism. He courageously offered his daughter in marriage to the son of an untouchable who was converted to Liṅgāyatism. Uriliṅga Dēva's Vacanas are conspicuous by their stress on the point that a serious seeker must love Liṅga like a woman who longs for her man separated for long. Uriliṅga Peddi, an untouchable who later became Liṅgāyat and disciple of Uriliṅga Dēva, is known for cramming his Vacanas with Sanskrit verses. When Brahmins refused to teach Sanskrit to the Śūdras and the untouchables Uriliṅga Dēva made his untouchable disciple well versed in Sanskrit lore. Uriliṅga Peddi seems to quote Sanskrit verses with a vengeance. Mādāra Dhūḷayya and Candayya (a rope-maker) treat their respective professions as worship such that they decide that even if Śiva stands before them they shall not notice him.

Indian tradition had degraded women and under the pretext that she is defiled by menstruation and child-birth had denied religious rights to her. She was also called temptress or Māyā. Basavaṇṇa gave women the protesting voice and during his time 35 women wrote 1349 Vacanas[16]. A woman was emboldened to ask,

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They say abandoning gold one must please Liṅga;
Why, is there an opposition between gold and Liṅga?
They say abandoning women one must please Liṅga;
Why, is there an opposition between women and Liṅga?[17]

The age-old belief that woman, gold and land are impediments in the spiritual path is boldly dismissed by her. Muktāyakka is bold enough to test Allama's wisdom and spiritual depth. Nīlamma, Basavaṇṇa's second wife, says that she and Basavaṇṇa are children to each other. Liṅgamma, Haḍapada Appaṇṇa's wife, has learnt that there is no difference between Kailāsa and mortal world. Satyakka says that she has resolved that she will not pick up things, ornaments or money which people have lost, nor will she accept bribes. Amuge Rāyamma and Akkamma condemn the attitude of some people who don the robe of mendicants to cover up their worldliness. In short, the Vacanas of women clearly suggest that spiritual life is not a monopoly of men but is open to women also.

In some cases the language used by the low caste Vacanakāras is very harsh. When uneducated low caste people are angry we cannot expect civilized language from them. Yet it is important to note that the Vacana-composers did not participate in the revolution like sheep but with full understanding of the situation and their responsibilities[18].

From this we can safely conclude that without depending on the Vacanas we cannot hope to reconstruct authentic philosophical and religious doctrines of Liṅgāyatism.

B. KANNADA POETIC WORKS (KĀVYAS)

After the revolution in Kalyāṇa in 12th century Basavaṇṇa and his followers scattered in different directions. Though the Vacana-writing took a temporary halt, poets began to write hagiographies and messages of the prominent leaders of the movement (e.g.: *Basava-purāna*); some collected all available Vacanas in one place (*Sakala Purānara Vacanagaḷu*);

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some classified the Vacanas according to the six or one hundred and one sthalas (e.g.: *Basavēśvarara Ṣat-sthalada Vacanagaḷu; ækōttara-śata-sthala*); some began to interpret them (e.g; *Liṅga-līlā-vilāsa-cāritra*); some arranged them in the form of questions and anwers (e.g.: the four versions of *Śūnya-sampādane*). The messages they incorporated in their works are mere recitation of the Vacanas in different forms. Some of the works worth mentioning are as follows.

1. ***Koṇḍaguḷi Kēśirājana Kṛtigaḷu*** **(Works of Koṇḍaguḷi Kēśirāja)**[19]: Koṇḍaguḷi Kēśirāja was a senior contemporary of Basavaṇṇa and a minister to Vikramāditya VI, also called Permāḍi (1076-1126), the king of Kalyāṇa. Seven works without titles have been ascribed to him and the editors have given them the following titles.

1. *Mantra Mahatvada Kanda or Ṣaḍakṣariya Kanda,*
2. *Liṅga-stōtrada Kanda-1,*
3. *Liṇga-stōtrada Kanda-2,*
4. *Navaratna-mālā,*
5. *Śīla-mahatvada Kanda,*
6. *Aḷalāṣṭaka*
7. *Kēśirāja Daṇṇāyakara Kanda.*

Of these the titles 1, 2, 3, 5 and 7 are relevant for our purpose.

All these works are in the style of Kanda (4 liner poems). The poems of the first work praise the chanting (japa) of the six-syllable Mantra, *ōm namaḥśivāya* as the means of overcoming evil qualities and developing moral and spiritual qualities. It is holy like taking a dip in holy rivers or performing Vēdic rituals, or giving food, gold, etc. in charity. It helps the spiritual aspirant to overcome mental modifications and temptations.

The second and third works praise Liṅga, Liṅga-worship and meditation on Liṅga. The author wants to merge in Śiva like salt in water or like a bee caught inside a fragrant flower, without being aware of the external world.

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The 7th work looks like a continuation of the second and third works.

The fifth work is a praise of 64 virtues (śīlas) which a staunch Śiva-devotee should nurture. However, the author mentions more than 64 virtues. In addition to the usual rules related to wearing Liṅga and Rudrākṣi, smearing Vibhūti, respecting Guru and Jaṅgama, consuming Prasāda, the author mentions 64 virtues. But about some virtues we have to ask: Do these really help enhance one's spiritual strength? For example, how can offering to Liṅga only cow's milk, not buffalo's; or how can getting services like washing clothes, dishwashing, etc. from only a Śiva-devotee; how can branding one's cow and her calves with the impressions of Liṅga; how can avoidance of consumption of salt which is defiled by marine creatures, etc. be regarded as spiritually significant?

The author is totally silent about Ṣaṭ-sthala. He, unlike the Vacanakāras, was not anti-Vēdic, because he had donated lands for the benefit of teachers who taught Vēdas, Purāṇas, etc; either he built a temple or renovated it. Both of these acts prove that he was not a Liṅgāyat.

2. ***Dīkṣā-bōdhe*** of Kereya Padmarasa[20]: Padmarasa (cir.1165-1200) is the grandson of Sakalēśa Mādarasa, a senior contemporary of Basavaṇṇa. He was commander in chief of the army of Narasimha Ballāḷa, who ruled the area round Dvārasamudra (the modern Haḷebīḍu in Hassan District, Karnataka state). He is famously called Kereya Padmarasa after the water tank (*kere*) which he built in Bēlūr, a nearby place. The authorship of *Dīkṣābōdhe* (Kannada) and *Sānanda-cāritra* (Sanskrit) is ascribed to him. *Dīkṣā-bōdhe* written in the Ragaḷe style and laced with quotations of Sanskrit ślōkas and consisting of only three sthalas (sections) has the objective of proving that initiation into Śiva-religion is the highest value man can think of. Actually, the book teaches the necessity of following *all* the rules of Liṅgāyat religion.

The book attracts our attention for two reasons. 1. It offers a rare information about the kinds of Liṅga. "There are

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five kinds of Liṅga – Bāṇa-liṅga made by gods, Svayambhū-liṅga (the Liṅga-shaped stone which emerges naturally from the earth), the Liṅga made and installed by men, demons and the like, Liṅga worn by men in their arms, wrists, chest, etc. and Cara-liṅga worshipped by the Pāśupatas". The author warns that since the worshippers of these Liṅgas distinguish themselves from Liṅga (God) and Prasāda, one should not receive Prasāda from them. 2. Fasting in the name of religion is not equal to consuming Prasāda. Those who undertake to fasting miss their Prasāda and are ignoring Liṅga residing in them. Moreover, they cannot achieve anything by self-mortification.

Otherwise, the book is a short summary of the usual Vacanas which deal with the principles and rules of Liṅgāyatism.

3. ***Hariharana Ragaḷegaḷu***[21]: Harihara lived, according to Dr M. M. Kalaburgi, in the second and third quarters of 13th century in Hampi. He adopts the Ragaḷe style introduced for the first time by Kereya Padmarasa in his *Dīkṣābōdhe*. He is believed to have authored 108 *Ragaḷes* of which 60 are of saints of Tamil Nadu, 22 are of saints of Karnataka and the remaining deal with variety of topics. Like the Vacanakāras, he breaks from the established tradition of poets writing laudatory poetry about their royal patrons. Similarly he, unlike his predecessors, who chose the incidents from the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata* chose to write about Śiva-devotees of all castes and of all classes. The histories of these saints do not give as much importance to historical facts, religious or philosophical doctrines as to miracles. Not all the 22 Karnataka saints are Liṅgāyats. Yet we can cull out some important Liṅgāyat doctrines from these histories, which are as follows. Hāvinahāḷa Kallayya's daughter throws down her earthen pot because it, she claims, was defiled by a Brahmin's touch; Kallayya's dog recites a portion of Vēda with correct intonation and accent. Śvapacayya, a low caste Śiva-devotee, covers his meat to be offered to Śiva with his footwear so that the sight of a Brahmin should not defile it. These three intend to show Liṅgāyats' protest against the Brahmin supremacy. Śiva drinks to his fill the gruel offered by

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Mādāra (cobbler) Cennayya and when the King Cōḷa offered delicious food he could not touch it, as there was no place in his stomach. This intends to show that offering a poor man's food with unselfish devotion is more important than offering delicious food. Telugu Jommayya hunts animals and sells their flesh but claims that the animals he kills go to Kailāsa. His violent profession is also 'morally good' because he uses a portion of the money for Dāsōha.

4. ***Siddharāma-cāritra*** of Rāghavāṅka[22]: Rāghavāṅka is son of Harihara's sister. Just as Harihara is famous for Ragaḷe style so is Rāghavāṅka famous for Ṣaṭpadi (six-liner poems) style. He is the author of *Hariścandra-kāvya*, *Siddhrāma-cāritra*, *Sōmanātha-cāritra*, *Vīrēśa-carite*, *Śarabha-cāritra* and *Harihara-mahatva*. The last two are not extant. Harihara has written long poems (Ragaḷe) in praise of many Śaraṇas of 12th century, excluding Siddharāma. Rāghavāṅka, as if to fill the lacuna, has written the story of Siddharāma, called *Siddharāma-cāritra*.

The *Siddharāma-cāritra* is divided into nine chapters consisting in all of 549 six-liner poems. The work does not throw any light on the speciality of Basavaṇṇa's religious or philosophical doctrines, but is of some help in understanding the beliefs and practices of Siddharāma,,who was a Śaiva, before he was influenced by Basava and others.

Siddharāma does altruistic works like constructing water tanks, wells, temples, free inns, etc. in the strong hope that Śiva would accommodate him into Kailāsa as a reward. From his Vacanas we learn that he was initiated to Liṅgāyatism by Cennabasavaṇṇa. But Rāghavāṅka never allows us to think so. In contrariety to the doctrines of Basavaṇṇa, Siddharāma of Rāghavāṅka upholds worship of installed Liṅga, polytheism, priest-craft, performance of Vēdic rituals, belief in Kailāsa as the goal of life, etc. Even after Siddharāma returns to Sholapur after the revolution in Kalyāṇa he is described as performing worship of installed Liṅga and Vēdic rituals. It is unfortunate that Rāghavāṅka does not recognize the ideological and spiritual impact on Siddharāma in the Kalyāṇa life and depicts him as a Vēdic and Āgamic Hindu.

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5. ***Basava Purāṇa*** of Bhīma Kavi[23]: Pālkurki Sōmanātha (1280) who lived in Pālkurki (Andhra Pradesh) wrote in Telugu *Basava purāṇamu*, the first hagiography on Basava and some of his close associates. *Basava Purāṇa* of Bhīma Kavi (1369) is the Kannada version of the Telugu *Basava purāṇamu*. Though the work is blatantly anti-Brahminic in its narration of the stories of the Bhaktas (Vīraśaivas or Jaṅgamas) it is at the same time pro-Vēdic.

Basavaṇṇa firmly believed that Vīraśaivism is superior to Vaiṣṇavism and Jainism (for the time being we ignore the distinction between Liṅgāyatism and Vīraśaivism. Please see Chapter Twelve). Harihara depicts Basavaṇṇa as worshipping the static Liṅga installed in temple while *Basava Purāṇa* depicts him as worshipping Jaṅgamas (Bhaktas or Vīraśaivas) and as financing their visit to prostitutes. Basavaṇṇa converted prostitutes to Liṅgāyatism.

Basava Purāṇa describes the strong proclivity of the Jaṅgamas to hurt the Jainas and the Vaiṣṇavas and to hurt themselves in the name of devotion; for example, Bāhūra Bommayya and his colleagues offer to Śiva their own legs, hands, intestines, etc.; Kaṇṇappa offers his own eyes; œkāntada Rāmayya decapitates himself.

The book prescribes violence, not to any animal, but only to those who abuse Śiva; to burn books which teach anti-Śaivism and asks women to disobey their non-Śaiva husbands. It upholds the superiority of manual labour which Brahmins had degraded. It does not distinguish between tanning the hide and performing the Vēdic rituals. Even thieving and hunting are acceptable as an honest profession if a part of the earning is used for the Jaṅgamas (Basavaṇṇa would not have approved of thieving and hunting for the sake of feeding the Jaṅgamas as they are immoral and dishonest professions).

6. ***Liṅga-līlā-vilāsa-cāritra*** of Kallumaṭhada Prabhudēva[24]: Kallumaṭhada Prabhudēva lived in Hampi in 1430. He explains the meaning of the title of the book as follows. In the beginning there was only Liṅga in the form of Śūnya or Bayalu without

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any being in it. When it decided to create, its Śakti which was latent becomes its part. Qualified by Śakti it divides itself into Aṅga and Linga. Because of his inherent forgetfulness Aṅga does all kinds of deeds which drive him to bondage (Samsāra) due to which he suffers. When because of Guru's teaching he learns that he is really Liṅga, he decides to become Liṅga again. By following the Guru's teaching of the Eight Aids of faith and six stages of spiritual progress the disciple becomes Liṅga again. Thus the history (cāritra) of every Śaraṇa is the history of Liṅga's frolic play (līlā-vilāsa) of becoming Aṅga and Aṅga again becoming Liṅga. So the book is about how to become Liṅga again.

The author says that 770 Vacanas dealing with Vīraśaivism are arranged under 16 Sthalas. Each Sthala begins with Sanskrit ślōkas, their commentaries in Kannada, followed by Vacanas and their Kannada commentaries.

The book draws our attention for three important reasons. 1. The author declares both in the prologue and the epilogue that since the Vēdas and the Āgamas do not teach the Ṣaṭ-sthala path of the Śaraṇas, they must be regarded as trash and rubbish. He proposes that if we want to know Ṣaṭ-sthala path, we must inevitably depend on the teachings enshrined in the guru-vacanas of the pioneers like Basavaṇṇa, Cennabasavaṇṇa, etc. 2. He gives reason why only the Vacanas of the pioneers must be regarded as the authentic source material for the study of the Ṣaṭ-sthala doctrine. His reason is that the Vacanas are the outflow of ecstasy which is the result of the pioneers' direct God-experience. In other words, to him, direct God-experience is the trustworthy basis and not the second hand knowledge of the Vēdas and the Āgamas. 3. The author, in his prologue and epilogue says that he has cited 770 Vacanas, commented on them and arranged them under sixteen Sthalas. But actually there are only 729 Vacanas and their commentaries. Surprisingly, there are 135 Sanskrit ślōkas, about which he is silent, thus inducing us to ask, who removed 41 Vacanas and who interpolated the ślōkas and why. It is quite possible that one who interpolated the ślōkas had the intention that the readers

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must think that what the Vacanas teach was already there in the Sanskrit works. It is for this reason that he cites the ślōkas and their commentaries *before citing the Vacanas*. It is highly improbable that Kallumaṭhada Prabhudēva did it, because otherwise he would not be silent about the ślōkas and he would not have called the Vēdas and the Āgamas trash and rubbish.

7. ***Prabhuliṅga-līle*** of Cāmarasa[25]: Cāmarasa gives no account of himself, his parents, place or date of birth in his work, *Prabhu-liṅga-līle*. But from other sources it can be known that he lived in Vijayanagar (1419-1446). *Prabhuliṅga-līle* contains 1111 six liner verses. The intention of the poet is to show that Allama Prabhu was an embodiment of Śiva himself, an accomplished Yōgi and a perfect celibate. While Harihara (13th Century) pictures Allama as one sent from Kailāsa as a punishment for being attracted to Māyā, and as one who, later, by self-effort rose to become one of the greatest Yōgis, Cāmarasa chooses to depict him as a taintless Yōgi who was never subject to Māyā. He portrays him as God himself coming in the mortal form of Allama in order to save mankind through miracles. His work, in short, is the story of conquest of spirituality over Māyā (ignorance).

The treatise begins with the statement of Śiva in Kailāsa that he is born as Allama in order to save mankind. Pārvati in order to test the intensity of Allama's spirituality sends her darker aspect in the form of a human female called Māyā. Māyā is born as the beautiful daughter of a chieftain and Allama as an expert in playing on mṛdaṅga (a percussion instrument). As Allama is ethereal bodied Māyā's attempt to embrace him fails.

The book is a story of many other events as well which resemble the ones narrated in the *Śūnya Sampādane*. Allama meets Basavaṇṇa, Animiṣa, Mahādēvi, Goggayya, Muktāyi, Maruḷu Śaṅkaradēva, Gōrakṣa and others. He condemns the then prevalent concepts and advocates his own, better ones. He teaches that going to Kailāsa is like avoiding cotton rope in preference to golden shackles; that one should not aggrandize the body, nor deprive the body-mind-sense complex of its basic

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needs but only control it; that one should show compassion to all animals; that man is the seeker, the sought after and the means; that womanizing and alchemy are the pursuits of sick minds; that all living beings are different forms of Śiva. Most importantly, he does not teach that the world is illusory but only that it is transient and worthless. The narration of feast arranged in honour of Allama's return is intended to show that just as when a pregnant woman eats the infant in her womb is also satisfied, so also when Allama eats tons of food all animals are satisfied, thus proving that Allama is their souls.

Apart from performing miracles, Allama reforms a few people with his compassionate glance, a few by his compassionate words, a few with ḥarsh words, some with praises, some with blessings, and so on. He gives corrective advice to some who are engaged in inefftive spiritual discipline.

8. ***Śiva-tattva-cintāmaṇi* of Lakkaṇṇa Daṇḍēśa**[26]: Lakkaṇṇa Daṇḍēśa (also called Lakkaṇṇa Amātya) was a rare combination of a great minister, a great commander of army, a great poet and a great mystic (H.Deveerappa, in his Introduction). That Abdur Ṛazak, a Persian traveller has extolled him is a proof of his manifold excellence. All Lakkaṇṇa's poems end with, 'I fall at the feet of . . .' people who are great in their respective professions or devotion to Śiva, capacity to judge, etc. His humbleness is so deep that he praises a Śiva-devotee even if his profession is basket-making or shoe-making. This is a great attitude for a prime minister of a kingdom. While his predecessors aggrandized small kings for their favours, he glorified insignificant men for their great Śiva devotion.

Lakkaṇṇa was born in Hosapaṭṭaṇa (Kolar District). Dēvarāya II (1426) to whom he became a minister had divided his kingdom into four parts and each was looked after by a governor (māṇḍalika) and Lakkaṇṇa Daṇḍēśa was one of them; but virtually Lakkaṇṇa was the ruler of all the four parts.

Śivatattva-cintāmaṇi consists of 2221 six-liner poems (ṣaṭpadi) spread over 54 chapters and intends to propagate the

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Śiva-faith. The special features of the book are as follows. 1. It narrates the 25 līlās (frolic plays) of Śiva. 2. Basavaṇṇa's life history is mythologized and many miracles are ascribed to him. 3. 63 pioneers are mentioned who are known for unswerving Śiva-devotion. 4. Guḍḍavve's followers offer their own heads to Śiva as a mark of devotion. 5. There are stories of Jēḍara Dāsimayya, Śaṅkara Dāsimayya, Siriyāḷa, Sindhu Ballāḷa, Kōḷūru Koḍagūsu, Mugdha Saṅgayya, Telugu Jommayya, Siddharāmayya, etc. and names of 600 post-Basava Śiva-devotees, like, Nuliya Kallappa, Gubbiya Mallaṇṇa, etc., their professions, native places (like Beṅgaḷūru, Nelamaṅgala), etc. Some of them belonged to Tamil Nadu. 6. There are also accounts of hell and heaven. 7. Lakkaṇṇa's account of Pādōdaka is noteworthy. He says after pouring water on the Iṣṭa-liṅga, the devotee must sip the water collected in the palm. (Elsewhere Pādōdaka is defined as water collected in the plate in which the feet of the Guru or Jaṅgama are washed and a few Vacanas advocate sipping of that water). He also mentions the way of Aṅga becoming Liṅga and the resultant tranquillity, peace and ecstasy of the one who has achieved it by following the Advaita-bhakti (monistic devotion) in which the devotee becomes God.

9. *Śūnya-sampādane* of Gūḷūru Siddhavīraṇṇoḍeya[27]: *Śūnya-sampādane* was written by Śivagaṇa Prasādi Mahādēvayya (1416-46) arranging the Vacanas of Allama, Basavaṇṇa and others in the form of question and answer. Therefore, structurally it is a sharp departure from all previous arrangements of the Vacanas. *Siddhānta-śīkhāmaṇī* is also in the form of a dialogue between Agastya and Rēṇuka, but it is a dialogue in which others do not participate, whereas *Śūnya-sampādane* is a dialogue in which many inquirers participate with Allama in the centre and express their feelings, thoughts, doubts and criticisms without hesitation. It was later edited by Halageyārya (1530-85), Gummaḷāpurada Siddhaliṅga (1580) and, finally, by Gūḷūru Siddhavīraṇṇoḍeya (1616).

We should note that in the four versions of *Śūnya-sampādane* the question of number of sthalas and their

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arrangement is pushed to the background and the four authors attempt not only to place the basic doctrines of Liṅgāyatism to forefront, but also to remove the then prevalent misconceptions about them. One also suspects that the authors want to prove that Liṅgāyatism has exemplary doctrines and practices. Thus Allama Prabhu teaches Siddharāma that the highest goal of life is not life in Kailāsa, but to become Liṅga while alive, that God is not elsewhere but that oneself is God; that Karma-yōga (altruistic works like constructing water tanks, watersheds, alms-houses, etc.) is not the way to final liberation but to follow the principles taught by Liṅgāyatism. He stresses the point that altruism may fetch him Kailāsa, but one who regards himself as different from Śiva is not liberated. Moreover, life in Kailāsa comes to an end once his merit exhausts. He teaches Basavaṇṇa that as all that exists is Liṅga's Prasāda, Basavaṇṇa's claim that he offers everything of *his* to Guru, Liṅga and Jaṅgama is wrong. Nor is one a Bhakta who donates things mechanically or for selfish motives. He reveals to the people around him that Maruḷu Śaṅkaradēva lived in the Prasāda-pit (a pit into which leftover was thrown) for 12 years without being noticed by anybody. He teaches Goggayya that body itself is a garden and we should cleanse it of all its defects and evils and make it a temple. Both Iṣṭa-liṅga and installed Liṅga are symbols of one's own soul which is real Liṅga. One who realizes his soul as real Liṅga experiences unmatched bliss and is liberated from all bondage. He is a moving God (Jaṅgama Liṅga) and moves in order to liberate people by teaching them the proper ways of liberation.

Sampādane allows low caste people like Āydakki Mārayya, Nuliya Cendayya and others to speak and emphasizes the point that performance of one's profession (Kāyaka) is itself a kind of worship, provided one does it unselfishly, intently and with a view not only to meeting daily needs but also to doing Dāsōha for the Jaṅgamas. Āydakki Mārayya says that one should not stop performing his Kāyaka (profession) even when he notices Guru or Jaṅgama in his presence. Nuliya Candayya goes a step further and employs Liṅga as his assistant

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in the production and sale of ropes. He also teaches a lesson to the Jaṅgamas who thought begging was their duty and it was the duty of the devotees to offer what was begged.

The most important teaching of *Sampādane* is that all souls are Liṅga. When Allama ate all the food served by Basavaṇṇa the food he ate was found in the stomach of a frog, which means that he was identical to Linga or God and that when he ate, others including the frog, who are different forms of God also ate.

10. Nijaguṇa Śivayōgi[28]: Nijaguṇa Śivayōgi was probably a chieftain of a small kingdom with Kollegal (Chamaraja Nagara district) as his capital. He seems to be a follower of Tōṇṭada Siddhaliṅga Śivayōgi's disciple and is, therefore, supposed to have lived around 1560. He has written 1. *Vivēka-cintāmaṇi*, 2. *Anubhava-sāra*, 3. *Paramārtha-gīte*, 4. *Paramānubhava-bōdhe*, 5. *Kaivalya Paddhati*, 6. *Paramārtha Prakāśike* and 7. *Purātana Trividhi*. All these Kannada works are written in the form of poems except *Paramārtha Prakāśike* and *Vivēka-cintāmaṇi*. The latter is an encyclopaedia and gives a sketchy distinction between Vīraśaivism and Śuddha Śaivism. *Kaivalya Paddhati* deals with Vīraśaivism in detail. But it has painted Vīraśaivism in Advaita colours. It advocates Brahman (infinite featureless consciousness) alone as reality and the body, senses, mind, etc. and the world as illusory and sense pleasure as worthless. One should aim at realizing one's true nature as featureless Brahman. The other works also teach Advaita without a single reference to Vīraśaivism.

11. *Basavarāja Cāritra* of Siṅgirāja[29]: It is also called *Siṅgirāja-purāna* because of its author Siṅgirāja. This Siṅgirāja is different from Daśagaṇada Siṅgirāja, a contemporary of Basavaṇṇa. He perhaps lived during 1440-1560. Nothing else is known about him.

Siṅgirāja writes that Basavaṇṇa left his village for Kūḍala Saṅgama to avoid the charge that he pushed a boy into a well to death. Basavaṇṇa became famous in Kūḍala Saṅgama for his unswerving devotion and the fame reached Baladēva,

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who, a minister in Kalyāṇa, gave his daughter, Gaṅgāmbikā, to Basavaṇṇa in marriage. Basavaṇṇa, according to Siṅgirāja, began writing Vacanas and loved to serve Jaṅgamas (Bhaktas or Liṅgāyats). Like other poets Siṅgirāja attributes 64 miracles to Basavaṇṇa. For example, the Jainas who came in the disguise as Jaṅgamas became real Jaṅgamas; the egg-plants some impostors wore became real Liṅgas; etc.

12. ***Vīraśaivāmṛta Purāṇa* of Gubbi Mallaṇārya**[30]: The book is authored by Gubbiya Mallaṇārya, the grandson of Gubbiya Mallaṇṇa, the author of *Gaṇabhāṣita Ratnamāle.* He lived in Gubbi, Tumkur district, in 1530. His other work is *Bhāva Cintāratna.*

Regarded as the biggest among the Vīraśaiva Purāṇas the treatise consists of 7099 six-liner poems (ṣaṭ-padi) and 817 Sanskrit ślōkas spread over 8 kāṇḍas (parts) and 136 chapters (sandhis).

In the beginning of the treatise it is said that Śīlavanta Dēva taught the contents to Halage Dēva, the latter taught them to Keñca Vīraṇṇa and Gubbi Mallaṇṇa put them in verse form. But instead of concluding that the doctrinal framework was provided by Halage Dēva and Mallaṇṇārya acted only as a clerk, we should remember that that is how, traditionally, the author expresses his gratitude.

The treatise, regarded as a Vīraśaiva encyclopaedia, deals with topics like 25 frolic plays (līlās) of Śiva, Gautama's arguments against philosophical schools like Vēdānta, Cārvāka, Buddhism, Jainism, Sāṅkhya, Vaiśēṣika, miracles narrated in *Basava Purāṇa*, stories of Śaraṇas like Mācayya, Kinnarayya, etc., the fourteen worlds, their areas, locations, the human physiology, consequences of good and bad actions, 101 Sthalas, how Vīraśaivism is different from both Vēdānta and Siddhānta, palmistry and astrology, infinite ways of self-transformation of Śiva-Śakti-complex, proper relation between Guru and his disciple, etc. The greatness of the author lies in his conviction that the different practices that lead to liberation are not contrary but complementary to one another.

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The author mentions the different sects of Śaivism such as Anādi-śaiva, Ādi-śaiva, Mahā-śaiva, Antara-śaiva, Pravara-śaiva, Anu-śaiva and Antya-śaiva and notes the conspicuous absence of Vīraśaiva. He, unlike other post-Basava authors, clearly says that Vīraśaiva does not observe astrological importance of day, time, position of the sun, the moon and the stars; does not go on pilgrimage, refuses to perform the Vēdic rites, is not bound by the caste and āśrama rules (prescribed by the Vēdic religion); utters no Mantra but Pañcākṣari, does not mix with Bhavis (non-Liṅgāyats); recognizes the identity of Śiva and Jīva. Vīraśaivism proscribes sahagamana (wife dying with her deceased husband) and fasting.

The treatise also deals with Pañcācāras, Basavaṇṇa's life history, classical music and classical dance.

13. ***Basavarāja Vijayam*** of Ṣaḍakṣara Dēva[31]: Ṣaḍakṣara Dēva, the author of *Basavarāja Vijayam* (also called *Vṛṣabhēndra Vijaya*), was born in his mother's parental house in Danugūru. An Āradhya Vīraśaiva, he was pontiff of two Maṭhas in Danugūru and Eḷandūru (Chamaraja Nagara District), but lived in Eḷandūru. He completed the writing of *Basavarāja Vijayam* in 1677. His other works are *Rājaśēkhara Viḷāsa*, *Śabaraśaṅkara Viḷāsa* and *Kavikarṇa Rasāyana* (Sanskrit). The authorship of nine small works is also ascribed to him.

He says that he is the descendant of Rudramuni, the son of Rēvaṇa Siddha and yet, unlike some modern Svāmis, praises heartily Basavaṇṇa, Cennabasavaṇṇa, Allama Prabhu, Tōṇṭada Siddhaliṅga Śivayōgi, etc. and then praises Rēṇuka, Paṇḍita, etc.

Basavarāja Vijayam is in Campū style (a mixture of poetry and prose). It has 42 chapters of which the first eight narrate Basavaṇṇa's life story. The other chapters narrate the story of famous Śiva devotees of Tamil Nadu and Karnataka. In fact, the stories of other Śaraṇas are related to Basavaṇṇa either directly or indirectly. In any case, these stories are full of miracles and hyperbole.

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Basavaṇṇa, says Ṣaḍakṣara Dēva, had decided to observe 16 vows; for example, to treat every Śaraṇa as Śiva, not to discriminate between them for any reason, not to deceive them, to treat Iṣṭa-liṅga as Prāṇa-liṅga, to keep promise at any cost, to perform Dāsōha for the Bhaktas, to show unswerving devotion to Liṅga, to be free from selfishness, etc. There are also narrations of Śaraṇas who frequently gave corrective advice to Basavaṇṇa.

14. Jakkaṇṇa (Jakkaṇārya), a contemporary of Māyidēva, is the author of ***ækōttara-śata-sthalī*** (Sanskrit) and *ækōttara-śata-sthala* (Kannada)[32]. The latter was believed hitherto to be authored by Mahāliṅga-dēva, but now Dr. M.M.Kalburgi and Dr. V.B.Rajur have come out with the theory that it was written by Jakkaṇṇa. Jakkaṇṇa has also written a commentary in Kannada on the Vacanas of Allama Prabhu. Both of these works have arranged the spiritual journey of a Vīraśaiva in accordance with the doctrine of 101 sthalas.

Compared to the treatment of 101 Sthalas by Jakkaṇārya and Śivayōgi Gubbiya Mallaṇṇa's treatment in his *Gaṇa-bhāṣita-ratna-māle*[33] is more rational. Sharply departing from both Jakkaṇṇa and Śivayōgi he divides the 101 sthalas into (1) Aṅga-sthala consisting of 44 sthalas, (2) Liṅga-sthala consisting of 45 sthalas and Niraṅgaliṅga-sthala consisting of 12 sthalas. He begins each sthala with a few Sanskrit verses taken from *Śivarahasya*, *Śiva-dharma*, etc. and their Kannada translation followed by the Vacanas of Basavaṇṇa, etc. Many of the sthalas in his book have new names and different topics than those of *Siddhānta-śikhāmaṇī*, *ækōttara-śata-sthalī* and *ækōttara-śata-sthala*. More importantly, he arranges the topics very systematically, which makes the book more endearing. For example, he states the reason for man's suffering, the cause of suffering and the cure suggested by Basavaṇṇa and others.

He declares in the beginning that the literature consisting of the Vēdas, Purāṇas, Śāstras, etc. is like concubine and the literature related to Śiva-faith is a wife coming from a decent family (I, 1-2). Those who follow the former are subject to

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rebirth and those who follow the latter conquer Bhava (worldliness). While he rejects the Vēdas, Purāṇas, etc. as the source of Vīraśaivism, he seems to think that Āgamas and the Vacanas are.

C. SANSKRIT WORKS

No Sanskrit works were written during or prior to the times of Basava on Liṅgāyatism. But many scholarly works appeared in the post-Basava period. However, instead of adding to our understanding of Liṅgāyatism, they only complicated the matter. Of them the most important are the following.

1. ***Siddhānta Śikhāmaṇī*** of Śivayōgi Śivācārya[34]: Śivayōgi Śivācārya says in the first chapter that he is a descendant of Siddharāma. Perhaps he lived in the 15th century. The word 'Siddhānta' in the title refers to Śaiva Siddhānta philosophy also and the work bears many similarities with Śaiva Siddhānta. Like the Siddhāntins it treats Śakti as the wife ('dharmacāriṇī') of Śiva, but unlike them it treats her as Prakṛti. It also tilts towards Vīraśaivism in many important respects.

The book is a dialogue between Rēṇuka and Agastya. Though the main intention of the author is to present the philosophical and religious doctrines of Vīraśaivism under 101 sthalas, he also has the hidden, unholy intention of proving the prevalence of Vīraśaivism during the Rāmāyaṇa period. But his attempts involve many inconsistencies. The most conspicuous of them are as follows. 1. Rēṇuka is born from a stone Liṅga and not from human parents. 2. He is born in the Dvāpara Yuga but teaches Agastya who lived in the Rāmāyaṇa period (Trētā Yuga, i.e., many thousand years ago before him). 3. He even goes to Sri Lanka on the invitation of Vibhīṣaṇa, the brother of Rāvaṇa who was already slain by Rāma, to establish 30 million Liṅgas. One can argue that Agastya lived for thousands of years till the arrival of Rēṇuka. But it is ridiculous to imagine that Rēṇuka born in the Mahābhārata period went back thousands of years to the Rāmāyaṇa period to Sri Lanka. 4. Rēṇuka says that he came to demolish the philosophical schools like Buddhism, Sāṅkhya, etc. But these

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schools of philosophy were not yet born. 5. The claim of some scholars that Rēṇuka taught Vīraśaivism to Agastya is false, because the texts of *Siddhānta Śikhāmaṇī* show that he repeats what the Āgamas say. 6. Rēṇuka teaches that oneness with Śiva is the highest goal of life but goes back to Kailāsa where he lives separate from Śiva. 7. In the third chapter Śiva is pictured as a Brahmin wearing golden sacred thread.

2. ***Śivādvaita-mañjarī*** of Svaprabhānanda[35]: Very little is known about the author of the *Śivādvaita-mañjarī*. But the publisher, Kashinatha Shastri, well known for his anti-Basava stand, guesses in his *Foreword* that the author, Svaprabhānanda, could be a very ancient scholar of Kashmir where Vīraśaivism flourished in the seventh century A.D. But he substantiates neither of the claims. The original Sanskrit work has only 36 pages, but the Kannada translation including the commentary has 1323 printed pages. The fact that the author quotes from *Śrīkara-bhāṣya*, *Śrīkaṇṭha-bhāṣya*, *Siddhānta-shikhāmaṇi*, etc. proves that the author must have been existing in nineteen century.

The book is divided into three parts. The first states the position of Śaṅkara's Advaita; the second states 'irrefutable objections' against it and the third aims at showing the superiority of Śiva and Śivādvaita (philosophy of Vīraśaivism). While it depends for the first two parts on the well known works like *Brahma-sūtra*, *Ratna-prabhā*, *Bhāmatī*, *Kalpataru*, *Śrī-bhāṣya*, *Śrīkara-bhāṣya*, *Śrīkaṇṭha-bhāṣya*, *Kriyāsāra*, etc., for the third it depends on works like *Śrīkara-bhāṣya*, *Śrīkaṇṭha-bhāṣya*, *Siddhānta-shikhāmaṇi*, *Kriyāsāra*, etc.

The aim of the work is blatantly clear: to show that Vīraśaivism is enshrined in the Vēdas, the Upaniṣads and the Purāṇas.

We deal only with the third part.

Vīraśaivism rejects the illusory theory of the world and posits the reality theory. Though Brahman is consciousness it can produce non-conscious objects, just as cow-dung produces insects. Moreover, the world is created out of Śiva's Śakti

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(energy) which is infinite. Śakti depends on Śiva just as attribute depends on substance. Śakti is latent before creation but not non-existent.

Our author refutes the four schools of Buddhism, Sāṅkhya, Pūrva Mīmaṃsā, etc. and insists that enquiry into Brahman is the first step toward liberation which is superior to heaven. Brahman of Vīraśaivism called Śiva or Liṅga is both efficient and material cause of all existence and is different from Śiva of Pāśupata who is only efficient cause. He rejects the argument that we can know God by inference and posits that he can be known only from the Vēdas.

Our author, like the author of *Siddhānta Śikhāmaṇī*, resorts to fanciful etymology of the word 'Vīraśaiva': 'Vi' means 'vidyā' or identity of Śiva and Jīva and 'ra' means one who enjoys the identity.

He quotes from *Śaṅkara-saṃhitā*. Men are superior to insects, twice-born are superior among them; Brahmins are superior among them; those who perform sacrifices are superior among Brahmins; among them are superior the mendicants; among these those who have knowledge of God are superior; among these Śiva-devotees are superior; among these Anubhāvis (those who have direct God-experience) are superior; none is superior to the Anubhāvis.

While the concepts of Śiva, soul, world and liberation are in accordance with the Vacanas, the quotations from *Śaṅkara-saṃhitā*, *Nārāyaṇōpanṣad*, *Pāṇi-mantra*, etc., force us to suspect that the intention of *Śivādvaita-mañjarī*, *Vīraśaivānanda Candrikā*, *Liṅgadhāraṇa Candrikā* is the same, that the practice of wearing Liṅga was prevalent at Vēdic times. But even if they are right they cannot prove that Vīraśaivism/ Liṅgāyatism is Vēdic.

3. ***Liṅgadhāraṇa-candrikā***[36]: The colophon of the Sanskrit work, *Liṅgadhāraṇa-candrikā* reads that it is authored by a descendant of Paṇḍitārādhya and son of Śrīkara Bhaṭṭārādhya. From the absence of the author's name and other details one can doubt the authenticity of the work. One Nandikēśvara has

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written a commentary on the work. As the work quotes passages from the *Siddhānta-śikhāmaṇi*, etc. one can infer that it is a work of later than 15th century. Based on the presupposition that wearing of Liṅga alone is the mark of Vīraśaivism, he sets out to prove that the external wearing of Liṅga is advocated by the Vēdas, the Upaniṣads, the Āgamas like Kāmikā, Alaṅkāra– and other Śāstras, Manu– and other Smṛtis and the Itihāsas like the *Mahābhārata*. According to him, *Mahābhārata* is Fifth Vēda (Pañcama-vēda)!

The author says that the description in the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* of reality as the highest principle, minute, calm, griefless, residing in the heart-lotus refers to Jyōtirliṅga (the brilliant light), also called Śiva or Mahēśvara. Though the epithets in that Upaniṣad such as 'thousand heads, etc.' seem to refer to Nārāyaṇa, they really refer to Śiva, because in the *Atharva-śira*, *Kaivalya* and *Kaṭha Upaniṣads* Śiva is described as very subtle, residing in the heart, taintless, etc. If Nārāyaṇa is praised in these texts, it is because he, being a great devotee of Śiva, attained permanent companionship (Sāyujya) with Śiva!

Similarly, the term 'daharōpāsana' (worship of small space) refers to Śiva, who being infinite space resides in the heart as small space. The Kaṭha Upaniṣad speaks of the Daharōpāsana, that is worship of Śiva residing in this small space of heart. *Hamsōpaniṣad*, *Vāmana-purāṇa* and *Siddhānta-śikhāmaṇī* endorse worship of Śiva, in the heart. Nārāyaṇa is the worshipper of Śiva, not the worshipped. Though 'Nārāyaṇa' conventionally means Viṣṇu, etymologically it means Śiva! Moreover, the *Vāmana-purāṇa* says that Hari (Nārāyaṇa) showed to the gods Liṅga residing in his heart. From the text, "God who is auspicious, all pervasive, omnipresent uses our eyes, heads and necks" (*Śvētāśvatara Upa.* III, 11) he draws the conclusion that Liṅga should be worn in mouths, necks and heads. He even argues that the six names of Liṅga which the Vacanakāras use namely, Ācāra-liṅga, Śiva-liṅga, Guru-liṅga, Jaṅgama-liṅga, Prasāda-liṅga and Mahāliṅga refer to the six of the 11 names of Liṅga in the "Pāṇimantram pavitam",

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namely, Ūrdhva-liṅga, Hiraṇya-liṅga, Suvarṇa-liṅga, Divya-liṅga, Bhāva-liṅga, Śarva-liṅga, Śiva-liṅga, Jvala-liṅga, Ātma-liṅga and Parama-liṅga (in the reverse order). Since the names like Bhāva-liṅga, Prāṇa-liṅga, etc. do not apply to installed Liṅga, it should be inferred that they apply to the Liṅga worn on the body.

He interprets the sentence, "Let me not be separated from Ōm" (III Chapter) to mean "Let me not be separated from Iṣṭa-liṅga" because Ōm and installed Liṅga both refer to Śiva. Similarly, the prayer "*Amṛtasya dēvadhāraṇa bhūyāsam*" (*Taitt.Upa.* I, 4), according to him, means "Let me be the wearer of Śiva (Liṅga)", since none wears other gods than Śiva, while in reality the text means "Let me imbibe Brahman". He interprets '*Brahmaṇaspate*' (Ṛg Vēda Mantra) as meaning that wearing Iṣṭa-liṅga is a precondition to the study of the Vēdas, while the correct interpretation accepted by scholars is that it Brahman occupies all bodies.

He also tries to prove that the Mantra in the Ṛg Vēda proves prevalence of the practice of Iṣṭa-liṅga wearing in the Ṛg Vēdic times. These two Mantras are as follows:

Ayam mē hastō bhagavān ayam me bhagavattaraḥ|
Ayam mē viśvabhēṣajaḥ ayam śivābhimarśanaḥ||
Ayam mātā ayam pitā ayam jīvāturāgamat|
Idam tava samarpaṇam subandhavē nirīhi||

The author interprets 'hasta' (hand) and 'resident of hand' are identical and both mean Lord Śiva. Though there is no word 'Iṣṭa-liṅga' in the Mantra, the term 'resident in the hand' denotes it. What else can there be in the hand than Iṣṭa-liṅga? But he does not quote the fourth line which means "Dear relative, I am offering it to you, please accept" for it would then mean that he is offering the Iṣṭa-liṅga and that separating Iṣṭa-liṅga from body is approved.

He also argues that the two mahāvākyas (maxims) of the Upaniṣads, 'Tat tvam asi' ('That thou art') and 'Aham brahmāsmi' ('I am Brahman') mean identity of the individual

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soul (aṅga) and universal soul (Liṅga). But he ignores the objection that in that case all Vēdāntins are Liṅgāyats.

The author with the help of his scholarship and unrestricted fanciful etymology tries to interpret the Sanskrit terms and sentences in an undesirable way.

4. ***Vīraśaivānanda-candrikā*** of Mari Tōṇṭadārya[37]:

Siddhavīrēśa Śivācārya lived in Gūḷūru (Tumakuru District), who was the teacher of Mari Tōṇṭadārya, who was well-versed in logic (Tarka), Grammar (Vyākaraṇa), Pūrva– and Uttara–mīmāṃsās and wrote commentary on the *Siddhānta-śikhāmaṇi* in Sanskrit and *Manōvijaya*, *Śatakatraya*, etc. in Kannada. Tōṇṭadārya's *Vīraśaivānanda-candrikā*, a Sanskrit work, has been commented on by one Gurushanta Shastri in Kannada. The author enjoyed royal patronage of Būdi Basappa, who ruled Keḷadi during 1740-1755.

The book consists three parts – Kriyākāṇḍa, Vāda-kāṇḍa and Kathā-kāṇḍa, of which only the second, consisting of various religious and philosophical topics spread over twenty-four chapters has been published. The other two parts of the book deal with the practices and stories of the saints of Vīraśaivism.

The book aims at demolishing the fallacious arguments of Cārvākas, Sautrāntikas, Vaibhāṣikas, Yōgācārins and Mādhyamikas, who are all heterodox (non-Vedic) and Lākuḷa, Bhairava, Kāpālika, Kālāmukha, followers of the Pāñcarātra Āgamas, Gautama, atheists like Vaiśēṣikas, and Sāṅkhyas, followers of Yōga and Pūrva-mīmāmsā schools and Brahmādvaitins who are Vaidikas.

Sense pleasures, however great, are temporary and lead to suffering. One who follows heterodox schools is subject to suffering. A Vīraśaiva is advised by Guru to attain knowledge which alone liberates him from all suffering.

The book is highly argumentative like any book of Indian school of philosophy. The author argues that God cannot be featureless and must have Śakti and some desirable qualities like omnipotence, omnipresence, creativity, etc. But he unlike

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Rāmānuja argues for the identity of Brahman and Ātman (Aṅga and Liṅga). He argues that Śiva transforms himself into the world without losing his original nature. To the objection that sometimes Vīṣṇu is also described as Parabrahman the author replies that the description applies really to Śiva because Vīṣṇu is a worshipper of Śiva!

Like the author of *Liṅga-dhāraṇa-candrikā*, our author reiterates that wearing Liṅga is not non-Vēdic but Vēdic, because, according to him, *Śiva-rahasya*, *Śaṅkara-saṃhitā*, *Garuḍa Purāṇa* and *Skanda Purāṇa* endorse wearing Liṅga and Indra and other gods wore Liṅga to gain positions. There are many arguments in this book which are reproduced from *Liṅga-dhāraṇa- candrikā*. According to him, Vibhūti made of cow-dung must be smeared by the twice-born while others may smear ashes of kitchen.

The proponents of the Vēdas accept the authority of the Vēdas and deny the authority of the Āgamas. Our author argues that since Śiva revealed both the Vēdas and the Āgamas both enjoy equal Prāmāṇya (authority) and there cannot be any opposition between the two.

He rejects Nīlakaṇṭha's doctrine of distinction between Śiva and individual souls and Śaṅkara's doctrine of illusory theory of the world. The last Chapter is devoted to prove the superiority of Vīraśaivism. According to him, all the doctrines and practices prescribed by the Vēdas such as performance of sacrifices, caste discrimination, observance of rituals like tonsure, christening, and the rules of Śāstras, may not apply to the Vīraśaivas, yet the Vīraśaivas are followers of the Vēdas.

The author's views are noteworthy. 1. The *Skānda-purāṇa* says that among the living beings man is superior, among men the twice-born and among the twice-born Brahmins, among the Brahmins those who know the Śāstras and among them those who perform sacrifices, among these the ascetics and among these those who know Brahman and among these the Liṅga-wearers are the best; among these those who realized the six Liṅgas are superior. 2. Vīraśaivism is founded by

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Rēṇuka and others who are directly created by Paraśiva while Basvaṇṇa, Śaṅkara, etc. are human-born. 3. Vīraśaivas do not follow the Vēdic rules but have their own rules, Mantra, Yōga, etc.

5. Maggeya Māyidēva (1420) is the author of ***Anubhava-sūtram***[38] (also called *Śivānubhava-sūtram*) which deals with major doctrines of Vīraśaivism, without using the name Liṅgāyatism or Vīraśaivism. He has also authored many Kannada books *œkōttara-śata-sthala* (six liner poems), *Ṣaṭ-sthala* (prose), *Śatakatraya*, etc.

6. Jakkaṇṇa (Jakkaṇārya), a contemporary of Māyidēva, is the author of ***œkōttara-śata-sthalī***[39] (Sanskrit) and ***œkōttara-śata-sthala*** (Kannada). The latter was believed hitherto to be authored by Mahāliṅga-dēva, but now Dr. M.M.Kalburgi and Dr. V.B.Rajur have come out with the conclusion that it was written by Jakkaṇārya. He has also written a commentary in Kannada on the Vacanas of Allama Prabhu.

7. ***Śrīkara Bhāṣya***[40]: *Śrīkara-bhāṣya* is a commentary on the *Brahma-sūtras* written from Vīraśaiva point of view. Its authorship is ascribed to one, Śrīpati Paṇḍita of 11th century. Since its publication in 1891 in Secunderabad it is surrounded by many controversies about authorship, time and doctrines.

1. It is true that Śrīpati Paṇḍita did exist during the time of Ananta Bhūpāla (1199-1279) who ruled Vijayawada in Andhra Pradesh. He is the same great scholar who is famously believed to have performed a miracle. When he, like Basavaṇṇa, dined with a Śūdra the other Brahmins excommunicated him. Enraged, Śrīpati by his occult power collected all fire in a silk cloth and hung it from a tree. When there was no fire in any hearth of Vijaywada the Brahmins came to their senses and repented and Śrīpati gave fire to the people. But history does not speak of any Śrīpati Paṇḍita who lived in the 11th century.

2. Vēdānta tradition has a recognized many commentators of the *Brahma-sūtras*, namely, Saṅkara (788-820), Bhāskara (1000), Rāmānuja (1017-1137), Śrīkaṇṭha (1270), Nimbārka (1250), Vallabha (1476-1544), Vijñāna

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Bhikṣu 1600) and Baladēva (1725). It is the practice of every commentator to criticize his predecessors' theories before he advances his own. But no commentator mentions *Śrīkara Bhāṣya* or its theory. This goes to prove that *Śrīkara-bhāṣya* is a later production.

3. *Śrīkara Bhāṣya* criticizes Madhva's stand. Even if we accept for the sake of argument that the name of Madhva was a later interpolation we cannot dismiss the fact that the author uses the epithet, 'atyanta bhēdavādinaḥ . . .' which refers only to the dualist Mādhvas. Moreover, his claim that his Dvaitādvaita is better than the two extremes, Advaita and Dvaita, strongly proves his awareness of Madhva's Dvaita which flourished in the 13th century and later. The fact that there are many texts of *Siddhānta-śikhāmaṇī* (1450) in *Śrīkara Bhāṣya*, also disproves that it was written in 11th century. The author's claim that Vīraśaivism (which he calls *savaidika Vīraśaivism*) is the only religion in the world which is consistent with the Vedas; his advice that Vīraśaivas must wear sacred thread in addition to Liṅga, must chant Gāyatri Mantra in addition to Pañcākṣari Mantra and grow tuft on his head; his argument that Vīraśaivas are divided into Brahmins, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas and Śūdras, his opinion that only Brahmins must be Gurus, that Vīraśaivas should observe Vēdic sacrifices and Sūtakas, that as Śūdras and women have no right to the Vēdic study they are not eligible for Mōkṣa - all these are diametrically opposed to Basavaṇṇa's Liṅgāyatism.

The most abominable feature of *Śrīkara Bhāṣya*, as revealed by Sri T.H.M. Sadashivayya, a judge in Andhra Pradesh in 1890, is that when one Paṇḍita Svāmi, who claimed to be a descendant of Śrīpati Paṇḍita asked some Sanskrit pundits of Secunderabad to write a commentary on the *Brahma-sūtras* from Vīraśaiva point of view, they produced it. But one of them, as discovered by Dr. Sri Immadi Shivabasava Swamiji of Mysore, lifted some 150 commentaries, some fully and some partially, from Rāmānuja's *Śrī-bhāṣya* to be incorporated in *Śrīkara-bhāṣya*. The plagiarized book was published in 1891 in Telugu script[41].

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8. ĀGAMAS: The corrupt Āgamas like *Pāramēśvara, Candrajñāna, Mukuṭa, Sūkṣma* and other Āgamas published from 1905 onwards by the Liṅgī-Brāhmaṇa Samskṛta Grantha-mālā of Sholapur, have many interpolations of 'Vīraśaiva' (?) doctrines that run blatantly contrary to the doctrines upheld by Basava's Liṅgāyatism (for details see Āgamic Theory of Origin under Chapter III).

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CHAPTER THREE:

FOUNDER OF LIṄGĀYATISM

If Liṅgāyatism is not a sect of Vēdic Hinduism, then, obviously we are faced with the inevitable question, 'Who founded Liṅgāyatism and when?' In fact, before the seventeenth century nobody had an iota of doubt about the founder of Liṅgāyat religion (also sometimes called 'Vīraśaivism'[1]). All pontiffs (Svāmis) of Guru-pīṭhas and those of Virakta-pīṭhas, alike and their respective followers, had accepted that it was founded by Basava in the 12th century. This is evidenced by the fact that they all began their books with 'Śrī Gurubasavaliṅgāya Namaḥ' ('I bow to Basava-guru who is but Liṅga'). Though it is true that some post-Basava Kannada authors made vain attempts to belittle Basava, nobody made a serious and courageous effort to prove that he is not the founder. Even the British authors who studied the then available Kannada works had concluded that Basava was the founder of Liṅgāyatism. So, the problem whether Basava is the founder owes its birth to some modern sectarian scholars who have tried to show that many philosophical and religious doctrines of Vīraśaivism (or Liṅgāyatism) are already found in Sanskrit works of pre-Basava time, like Vēdas, Āgamas, *Siddhānta-śikhāmaṇī*, etc. But when some other scholars noticed the creation of fake works, like *Śrīkara-bhāṣya* (1892) and corrupt Āgamas (published 1905 onwards) and the evil intention behind it, they realised the seriousness of the problem and attempted to respond to it. As a result, there are now two camps, those who ascribe the foundation of Liṅgāyatism to Basava and defend it and those who deny it.

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As a result of these conflicting claims the problem of founder and origin of Vīraśaivism has become acute, complicated and inconclusive. The problem cannot be solved easily because some of the contestants, especially those that are unable to think analytically and impartially mistake mythology for history. Most of their arguments are charged with emotion rather than reason. Some who know the truth refuse to publicly acknowledge it. Some have a wrong notion of founding a new religion. Some scholars cleverly twist the meaning of what they call evidences, either by dropping or by interpolating a word or phrase or sentence.

Unless we settle these questions (which is not impossible), we cannot hope to evaluate the truth of the answers. Otherwise, blindfolded we will try to find a way out in a trackless forest. Let us, therefore, discuss the principal hurdles which prevent us from discovering a way out.

For this purpose we divide the arguments into two main groups, A. the arguments which deny foundation of Liṅgāyatism to Basava and B. the arguments which ascribe it to Basava, and critically weigh their merits and demerits.

A. ANTI-BASAVA THEORIES OF THE ORIGIN OF LIṄGĀYATISM

1. The Akhila Bharatīya Vīraśaiva Mahāsabhā (All India Vīraśaiva Conference) with its main office in Bengaḷūru, Karnataka, in its first session held in Dharwad in 1904 resolved **that the members of this Sabhā accept that Vīraśaivism is enshrined in the Vēdas, Āgamas, Upaniṣads and Commentaries and that it was only propagated, not founded, by Basava as proved by the stone inscriptions, etc.**

Some scholars, including Dr.M.Chidanada Murthy[2] take this resolution for an indubitable proof for the prevalence of Vīraśaivism during pre-Basava times. This argument has many loopholes. 1. A resolution of a conference depends on the numerical strength of the members of the session, not on its

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logical merit or historical facts. The same resolution can be accepted by one thousand members and rejected by one thousand and one members. In fact, the same resolution was rejected in the next session of the Mahāsabhā held in Davanagere in 1940[3]. 2. The people who resolved could all be morons, or sectarian bigots, not honest scholars. 3. The stone inscriptions referred to in the resolution are not published till date. 4. The claim that the doctrines of Vīraśaivism are enshrined in the Vēdas, Āgamas, Upaniṣads, etc. is false. 5. This resolution was accepted in a period when the Kannada Vacanas, which are the main and true source materials of Liṅgāyatism were not yet unearthed completely.

2. THE PAÑCĀCĀRYA THEORY: The Pañcācārya theory proposes that pañca (five) Ācāryas (preceptors) took their birth from the five faces of Śiva in Kailāsa, descended to earth, emerged from the five installed Liṅgas in four aeons (i.e., 20 in all) and preached Vīraśaivism. The names of the aeons (yugas) and the Ācāryas are as follows:

1. **Kṛta-yuga - œkākṣara, Dvayakṣara, Trayakṣara, Caturakṣara, Pañcākṣara;**
2. **Trētā-yuga - œka-vaktra, Dvi-vaktra, Thri-vaktra, Caturānana, Pañca-vaktra;**
3. **Dvāpara-yuga – Dāruka, Rēṇuka, Dhēnukarṇa, Ghaṇṭā-karṇa, Viśvakarṇa;**
4. **Kali-yuga - Maruḷa, œkōrāma, Rēvaṇa, Paṇḍita, Viśvārādhya[4].**

While the names of the Kali-yuga Ācāryas look familiar and believable, those of the Ācārayas of the earlier yugas are completely fictitious and unbelievable. From the rhyming of their names (e.g. œkākṣara = one lettered, Dvayakṣara = two-lettered, etc; œka-vaktra = one faced, Dvivaktra = two faced, etc.) we can easily conclude that they are a fabrication of the Purāṇic author who could not think of real persons' names.

For those who advance the Pañcācārya theory the source is *Siddhānta-śikhāmaṇī*, a Sanskrit work of the fifteenth or later

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century. This book says that Rēṇuka descended from Kailāsa to the earth in Dvāpara-yuga to teach Vīraśaivism to Agastya, a sage of the previous yuga, Trētā-yuga! But this attempt to ...evalence of Vīraśaivism during the times of Rāmāyaṇa is met with many internal evidences which prove otherwise. 1. Rēṇuka was born in Dvāpara-yuga and taught Vīraśaivism to Agastya who lived thousands of years before him, i.e., in Trētā-yuga! 2. Rēṇuka descended from Kailāsa to the earth to demolish Buddhism, Sāṅkhya[5], etc. which were not yet born. If he can condemn Buddhism, Sāṅkhya, etc., on the one hand, and can go to Sri Lanka on the invitation of Vibhīṣaṇa[6] (the deceased Rāvaṇa's younger brother), on the other, he must simultaneously belong to Trēta-yuga, Dvāpara-yuga and Kali-yuga (of Buddhism), i.e., he must have lived many thousands of years. It is logically possible that he lived for thousands of years, but impossible that he travelled backwards in time! While the author of the *Siddhānta-śikhāmaṇī* has unbridled imagination, with no respect for logic, it is sad to note that he has followers.

There are two more internal evidences which prove that Rēṇuka is at best a teacher of Vīraśaivism, not its founder. Rēṇuka himself says (4.14) that Vīraśaivism is enshrined in the latter parts of Āgamas, like Kāmikā, etc. Again, he says (1.28, 1.29) that he teaches Vīraśaivism that is taught in the Āgamas, Purāṇas, etc. which earlier Śiva revealed to others.

Jesus, Buddha, Mohammad and Basavaṇṇa were all historical persons and taught their religions to people in their own languages and in their own native lands. But Rēṇuka emerges from a stone Liṅga and coming all the way from Andhra Pradesh, the land of Telugu speakers, teaches Agastya who was already well versed in Śivādvaita (and not ordinary people) of Karnataka, not in Telugu or Kannada, but in Sanskrit. People who do not distinguish between mythology and history stick to these ideas dearly.

Dr. Chidananda Murthy in his two articles[7] has shown clearly and incontrovertibly that the very idea of Pañca-ācārya

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(five pontiffs) does not stand the test of reason. 1. Rēṇuka is not a historical, but only a mythological person. Those who want to prove his historicity have also to prove the historicity of his descent from Kailāsa and of Śiva, Pārvatī and others. 2. There was a historical person called Rēvaṇa (or Rēvaṇasiddha), believed to be an incarnation of Rēṇuka. He was contemporary of Basava, Allama Prabhu, Siddharāma, Rājēndra Cōḷa, etc. of the 12th century. But no book or Vacana ascribes the foundation of Vīraśaivism to him. 3. The Vacanakāras fondly praise the Śiva-devotees like Cennayya, Kakkayya, Kaṇṇappa, Kumbāra Guṇḍayya and others, who belong to low castes. They also praise Rēvaṇa, œkōrāma, Maruḷa and Paṇḍita. But no Vacanakāra regards them as greater than Basava, Cennabasava, Allama Prabhu or as the founders of Vīraśaivism. 4. Moreover, the very idea of Pañca Ācāryas is as late as the 17th century. In 1698 Sampādaneya Parvatēśa in his treatise, *Caturācārya-cāritra* (= History of Four Ācāryas), makes mention of four Ācāryas (Paṇḍita, œkōrāma, Maruḷa and Rēvaṇa) and the fifth, Viśvārādhya, was added later. Therefore, the Pañca-ācārya theory sadly fails.

3. THEORY OF ṚGVœDIC ORIGIN: Some who want to trace the antiquity of Vīraśaivism to Ṛg Vēda have produced the following two arguments.

(a) Ṛg Vēda speaks of Rudra and Basavaṇṇa himself in his Vacana[8] declares that Śiva is the only God; Rudra is one without a second. From these unconnected premises some scholars conclude that Vīraśaivism is as old as Ṛg Vēda. But while the premises of this argument are true, the conclusion drawn from them is false. Because the Rudra referred to in the Ṛg Vēda is totally different from Rudra or Śiva of the Vacanas. In the Ṛg Vēda Rudra is described as fierce (II.33.9), destructive like wild beast (II.33.11) and he moves fast like storm (I.114.4); and he is slayer of cows (I. 114.10), of human beings (I.114.14) and he is the father of Maruts, creator of lightning and thunder and forest fire. He is described elsewhere as copper complexioned, bright, wearer of gold ornaments, wise and

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intelligent, generous, greatest medicine man (I.43.4, II33.7), etc.

This description shows that the Ṛg Vēdic Rudra is different from Rudra or Śiva of the Vacanas. All the qualities ascribed to him are anthropomorphic and generate fear rather than devotion. Obviously, the Vēdic people performed sacrifices to appease him. Rudra is one of the many gods. Śiva of Liṅgāyatism, on the contrary, is creator, maintainer and destroyer of the world and has many sublime qualities that generate in us admiration and gratefulness and devotion. Moreover, unlike Rudra of the Ṛg Vēda, he is one and the only God.

Sri Sham. Ba. Joshi, a noted thinker, in his *Śiva-rahasya* (pp.4, 5, 35) makes three important points in this regard. 1. Though the word 'Śiva' ('auspicious') is used as an epithet to describe the Ṛg Vēdic Rudra, Rudra is not Śiva of southern Śaivism who is an omnipotent creator, maintainer, etc. 2. Śiva is a Dravidian deity and is not one among the many Vēdic gods. 3. As the word 'Liṅga' does not occur in the Ṛg Vēdic description of Rudra, to identify him with Liṅga (Śiva of the Liṅgāyats) is erroneous. In other words, it is foolish to search for Liṅgāyatism in the Vēdas[9].

(b) Some scholars argue that as there is a reference to Iṣṭa-liṅga worship in the Ṛg Vēda and since Iṣṭa-liṅga worship is a cardinal aspect of Vīraśaivism, it follows that Vīraśaivism is as old as ṚgVēda. To substantiate their claim they cite the following Mantra.

Ayam mē hastō bhagavān ayam mē bhagavattaraḥ|
Ayam mē viśvabhēṣajaḥ ayam śivābhimarśanaḥ||
Ayam mātā ayam pitā ayam jīvāturāgamat|
Idam tava smarpaṇam subandhavē nirīhi||

(Ṛg. Vēda 10-4-60)

[This very hand of mine is God, this hand is holy. This hand is the eradicator of the Bhava-rōga; this hand gives the vision of Śiva; this hand is the mother, father; this hand is all living beings; my dear relative, I am offering this to you; please receive it.]

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Those who cite this Mantra ask us to note that though the word 'Iṣṭa-liṅga' does not appear in this Mantra, the phrase 'Ayam mē hastō bhagavān' means God in my hand and God in my hand cannot mean anything but Iṣṭa-liṅga[10]. Moreover, Basavaṇṇa and others have described God as mother, father, one who cures the Bhava-rōga (disease called worldly existence), etc.

But a close examination reveals that there is no reference to Bhagavān (God) held in hand. In other words, the first half of the first line is wrongly interpreted with unholy intention; secondly, if it does refer to Iṣṭa-liṅga, why should the devotee say, 'I offer it to you'? The interpreter's attempt to confuse others between 'There is God in my hand' and 'My hand is God' fails.

4. THEORY OF ĀGAMIC ORIGIN

Some scholars, who do not like to acknowledge ascription of foundation to Basavaṇṇa, argue that the Āgamas already contain the philosophical and religious doctrines of Vīraśaivism and the same were reproduced in Kannada in the form of Vacanas in the 12th century and later. It is necessary while considering this angle to note that there are Āgamas of three kinds.

There are, as accepted by Indian tradition, 28 Śivāgamas, not all of which are extant. Even the ones extant are extant only partially. Scholars are convinced that they do not make any reference to Vīraśaivism or Liṅgāyatism either by name or by the important doctrines such as Aṣṭāvaraṇa, Ṣaṭ-sthala and Kāyaka-Dāsōha. It is the absence of these doctrines in the Vēdas and Āgamas that forced Kallumaṭhada Prabhudēva (1430) to set aside them as trash and non-sense (*jaḍḍu, gojaḍu*)[11] and to depend entirely on the Vacanas of the Pioneers (Purātanaru) like Basavaṇṇa, Cennabasavaṇṇa, Allama Prabhu, etc. for writing a treatise on Liṅgāyatism.

Till as late as 15th century the Āgamas were not corrupted, i.e., they were free from interpolation of Liṅgāyat or Vīraśaiva doctrines. This is evidenced from the fact that

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Tōṇṭada Siddhaliṅga Śivayōgi of 1460 has clearly said that we cannot learn Liṅgāyat doctrines and practices from the Āgamas. 1. He says that as God himself becomes Śaraṇa, there cannot be any difference between the two and this can be realised from self-experience (*svānubhava-vivēka*), not from Āgamas or reason[12]. Again he repeats this but with a justification: our desire for union with Liṅga is not fulfilled by the Śāstras (scriptures) as Ṣaṭ-sthala Yōga is different from the path of Āgamas[13]. 2. While speaking of the distinguishing feature of Śaraṇa's Mōkṣa again he condemns the Āgamas, the Śrutis (Vēdas), etc. For those who know themselves there is no need for Āgamic instruction and for those who want self-experience Śāstras and Āgamas do not help, because they do not teach the necessity of Prasāda[14]. Only Vacanas are Pramāṇa and Āgamas are not Vacanas. Therefore, Vacanas are Vīraśaivāgamas or Mahāvākyas (maxims) of Purātanas. The practice (*vartane*) of the Śaraṇas is different from those of the followers of Vēdānta and Siddhānta (philosophy of the Āgamas).

However, the *Siddhānta-śikhāmaṇī* (4.14) says that in the latter parts of a few Āgamas, like *Kāmikā*, *Vātula*, etc. Vīraśaivism is enshrined. That these doctrines were interpolated is proved by the fact that the *Suprabhēda-āgama* mentions along with these doctrines, the names of those who advocated them, like Basava, Cennabasava, Allama Prabhu, etc.[15]

The Āgamas thoroughly corrupted and published by the Liṅgī-brāhmaṇa-samskṛta Granthamālā of Sholapur since 1905 seem to have been driven by the sole aim of opposing all doctrines of Basavanna. Some deserve mention.

1. Basavaṇṇa advocated monism of God, man and the world, whereas these Āgamas unabashedly advocated polytheism. One should, according to them, worship Śiva, Pārvatī, Gaṇapati, Kumāra, Indra, Agni, Dikpālakas (guardians of eight directions), Svāhā (Agni's wife), etc.[16]

2. Śiva of the Āgamas is restricted to Kailāsa. He is depicted purely in anthropomorphic terms. He has a wife, children, servants, cohorts, wears garland of skulls, holds a

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trident and a tabor, wears the skin of elephant, etc. This mythological Śiva, it should be noted, is not a creator nor is he omnipresent[17]. In fact, every Āgama begins with description of Śiva in Kailāsa surrounded by his wife, children and other cohorts.

In contrast, Liṅgāyats believe in a formless Śiva who is creator, protector, destroyer and judge who punishes the wicked and graces the virtuous. They in general hold that consciousness present in every animal is Śiva (Liṅga) and one should not go out in search of God.

3. Basavaṇṇa in his later life did not believe in Kailāsa, either as the abode of mythological Śiva or as the goal of spiritual life. According to him the ultimate goal is union with Liṅga and it should be experienced while alive[18].

4. Liṅgāyatism opposes caste system. Basavaṇṇa argues that if a man wears Liṅga he loses his caste and becomes holy and equal to other Liṅga-wearers and if one does not wear Liṅ ga, both the untouchables and the Brahmins become equally unholy[19]. In contrast, the Āgamas vehemently advocate casteism. The *Kāraṇāgama* says that a Vīraśaiva should wear sacred thread[20]. No Vīraśaiva should worship his Liṅga with flowers supplied by a Śūdra[21]. In order to prove the importance of casteism a chapter called '*Varṇāśrama-dharmāvaśyakatā-kathanaṃ*' has been added to the latter part of the *Candrajñānāgama*.

5. **Guru**: Basavaṇṇa rejected the traditional idea that only a Brahmin should be a Guru and argued that anyone who has self-realisation is eligible to be a Guru. His philosophy is that the consciousness present in all is the same and one who realizes it is superior to those who have not realised it, whether they are Brahmins or not. On this principle he chose Cennayya, Kakkayya, etc. who were untouchables as his Gurus, rather than a Brahmin who is subject to serial births. In contrast to this the *Candrajñānāgama* holds that only a Brahmin can be a Guru[22].

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6. Basavanna and his associatess in chorus exhorted that all able-bodied people should do some profession or the other and nobody should beg. In opposition to this the *Pāramēśvara-āgama* exhorts that no Vīraśaiva should do the profession of a Brahmin, Kṣatriya, Vaiśya or Śūdra. For a sumptuous meal one should beg[23]. The same Āgama says[24] that no Vīraśaiva should carry load on his head, cut plants or trees, dig ground or till the land. By this standard no farmer, potter, labourer, merchant, soldier, fuel-wood seller, etc., but only beggars deserve to be called Vīraśaivas.

7. Basavaṇṇa advocated that all able-bodied persons must earn more and distribute the excess among the have-nots. This is in coherence with his famous doctrine "Compassion is the root of religion". In opposition to this humanitarian ideal the *Pāramēśvara-āgama* advocates that no Vīraśaiva should give charity[25].

B. BASAVAṆṆA IS THE FOUNDER

That Basavaṇṇa is the founder of Liṅgāyatism is corroborated by 1. statements of Basava's contemporary Vacanakāras, 2. the statements of post-Basava poets and 3. the novelty of Basava's doctrines. The first two corroborations disprove Dr.Nandimath's claim that no book in Kannada or Sanskrit ascribes foundation of Liṅgāyatism to Basava.

1.OPINIONS OF BASAVAṆṆA'S CONTEMPORARY VACANAKĀRAS

Dr. S.C.Nandimath in his *Handbook of Vīraśaivism* concludes that the theory that Basava is the founder of Liṅgāyatism is "far from the truth, for none of the books on Vīraśaivism, either in Kannada or in Sanskrit, ascribes the foundation of the sect to Basava . . . A critical examination of the theology and metaphysics of the sect suggests that it is very ancient"[26]. It is unfortunate that a scholar of Nandimath's eminence should consider the resemblance between theology and metaphysics of one religion and those of another as the unassailable evidence for judging that those two religions are also the same. He should have noted that there can be similarity

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between metaphysics and theology of two different religions. For example, theology and metaphysics of Judaism, Christianity and Islam are almost the same. Both Judaism and Christianity are covenant religions, both admit that Yahve (God) created the world in six days and on the seventh day took rest, that he created the firmament, the sun and the moon, the earth, the animals in a particular sequence, that he created man in one stroke (the theory that opposes the evolutionary biology) and so on. And yet these two religions are different. Similarly, dualism of the Mādhvas and that of Śaiva Siddhāntins are similar, but their religious doctrines are different. Therefore, just because the metaphysics of Liṅgāyatism resembles that of Kashmir Śaivism or Śaiva Siddhānta, it need not follow that Liṅgāyatism is the same as these two religions. What makes two religions different is the set of religious doctrines.

Secondly, his comment that no book ascribes foundation to Basava is hasty, false and baseless, because he did not study the Vacanas and other source materials.

Many Vacanakāras of the 12th century describe Basava unambiguously as the founder of Liṅgāyatism, by calling him the first teacher (prathamācāri) and the ancient teacher (pūrvācāri). Allama Prabhu, for example, says,

Because in the beginning you were Guru
Liṅga was born of you;
Because in the beginning you were Liṅga,
Jaṅgama was born of you;
. . . Prasāda was born of you;
. . . Pādōdaka was born of you.
. . . you were the Prime teacher . . .[27]

This Vacana means that the (new) cardinal principles of Guru, Liṅga, Jaṅgama, Prasāda, Pādōdaka, came into practice because of Basavaṇṇa. Again Allama in another Vacana[28] uses the word 'Pūrvāvācāri' to refer to Basavaṇṇa. He calls him the world-teacher (viśvaguru) as he knows Śiva is Guru, Liṅga, Jaṅgama and Prasāda[29]. As Basava taught the principles of Guru, Liṅga, etc. to his followers for the first time, he deserves to be called Pūrvācāri[30].

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Similarly, Cennabasavaṇṇa, Basavaṇṇa's nephew, colleague and trusted aide, compares him to an archer with new faith as his arrow[31]. In support of his claim he says that Liṅga, Jaṅgama and Prasāda were born in the womb of Basavaṇṇa, meaning he is the 'cause' (founder) of the new faith[32]. In another Vacana[33] he says Basavaṇṇa taught the cardinal doctrines for the first time, that the human body is not made of flesh, but of Mantra, not of matter, but of Prasāda, that man is not just a breathing animal (vāyu-prāṇi), but a moving Liṅga. According to him, Basavaṇṇa is the first preceptor (prathama ācārya)[34], ancient teacher (pūrvācārya)[35] and nobody knew Ṣaṭ-sthala before him[36]. He uses these two words again to refer to Basavaṇṇa in other Vacanas[37]. In another Vacana he says "Hara (Śiva) to manifest his form came down to the earth taking the form of Guru . . . Mantra . . . Liṅga . . ." in the form of Basavaṇṇa[38].

Siddharāma expressing the same idea says that Śiva became Basavaṇṇa who in turn became Guru, Liṅga, Jaṅgama and Prasāda[39]. In his *Basava-strōtrada-trividhi* he calls Basavaṇṇa the Ādi-guru, Anādi-guru (the first teacher, the beginningless teacher)[40]. Ghaṭṭivāḷayya begins one of his Vacanas with these words, "As in the beginning Basavaṇṇa had no Guru-liṅga . . ."[41]. The word Guru-liṅga may be interpreted to mean either Guru who is equal to Liṅga, or the Iṣṭa-liṅga offered by Guru. In either case, it means that Basavaṇṇa had no Guru who gave him Iṣṭa-liṅga. In other words, he started the practice of Iṣṭa-liṅga worship. Maḍivāḷa Mācayya praises Basavaṇṇa as the one who revealed for the first time the real nature of Liṅga, Jaṅgama and Prasāda[42]. Similarly, Hāvinahāḷa Kallayya, like other followers, calls Basavaṇṇa Pūrvācāri[43].

2. THE STATEMENTS OF THE POST-BASAVA POETS

The poets who have produced poetic works in Kannada to praise Basavaṇṇa all belong to the post-Basava period. The earliest among them, Pālkurike Sōmanātha (1200), in the invocatory poem of his work *Gaṇasahasra* addressing him

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Gurubasavaliṅga (Basava Guru who is equal to Liṅga) describes him prathamācārya (the primal teacher)[44] and bows down to him.

Maggeya Māyidēva (1430) in his *Śivādhava-śataka* describes Basava as Vīraśaiva-nirṇaya-parmāvatāra, the greatest incarnation who determined the principles of Vīraśaivism[45]. Cāmarasa (1400) in the invocatory verse of his *Prabhuliṅgalīle* refers to Basava as great ('royal') ancient teacher[46] (rāya-pūrvācāri). Mallaṇārya of Gubbi (1530) in his *Vīraśaivāmṛta-purāṇa* declares, "It is Basava who determined Ṣaṭ-sthala – who else could?"[47] Bommarasa (1450) in his *Saundara-nambi-purāṇa* unambiguously says that in the beginning Basavaṇṇa caused Liṅgāyatism on the earth. Mari Tōṇṭadārya (17th century) concludes that it is Basavaṇṇa who in the Kaliyuga founded Vīraśaivism[48] (or Liṅgāyatism).

3. NOVELTY OF BASAVAṆṆA'S DOCTRINES

In addition to the above evidences we can cite Basavaṇṇa's new doctrines as evidences for our support. If they are proved new, Basavaṇṇa must be regarded as the founder of a new faith. His doctrines can be brought under three heads, philosophical, religious and social.

1. Philosophical doctrines

Basavaṇṇa's aim was to construct a new society based on new theology and new religion. He wanted to free people from ignorance which was the basis for their polytheism and the related fear. He proved to them that their conception that deities demanded from their devotees petty food, like porridge, chicken, etc., that their abodes were haunted places and that they had birth and death was philosophically ridiculous and a basis of wrong religion. He assured people that if they gave up worship of inanimate objects, petty gods, Vēdic gods, etc. they would not be punished by them and that if they worshipped one and only God, Liṅga, they would be benefitted here and hereafter. In fact, no deity who is not creator, omnipresent and omnipotent deserved worship[49]. Basavaṇṇa ridiculed the old Śaiva concept of Kailāsa to which Śiva's abode was restricted.

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Basava, like Advaitins, held that the soul residing in everybody is Liṅga. Yet the Vēdāntins restricted Mōkṣa to the three upper classes and denied it to the Śūdras on the ground that they do not wear the sacred thread. He declared that all those who wear Liṅga are superior and equal and are, therefore, eligible to Mōkṣa. He replaced the idea of Svarga or Kailāsa as the goal of spiritual life with the new idea of becoming one with Śiva while alive. One who identifies oneself with Śiva sees Śiva everywhere and experiences him always (see the Chapter on Social Philosophy).

2.Religious doctrines

2.1 Rejecting Śaivism which involved sacrificing one's own bodily parts as a mark of devotion and the Vēdic religion which involved animal sacrifice, Basavaṇṇa gave a new definition of religion, that it is rooted in compassion (*dayavē dharmada mūla*)[50]. For him religion consists, not in loud chanting of long Sanskrit Mantras, or elaborate worship advocated by the Āgamas, but in showing compassion to fellow beings. In coherence with his conviction that all living beings or moving Liṅgas (Jaṅgamas) are the same as omnipresent and immovable Linga he reiterated that showing compassion to the former is the proper worship of the latter.

2.2 Guru, traditionally, is Brahmin in all sects of Vēdic religion. But Basavaṇṇa not only rejected the Brahmin primacy but declared Cennayya, Kakkayya and other great Śiva-devotees are his Gurus, though they were low-born. Cennabasava[51] and Tōṇṭada Siddhaliṅga Śivayōgi[52] insisted that one should not be initiated by Śaiva Gurus who are Brahmins and advised those who were already initiated by the Śaiva Gurus to get initiated by Liṅgāyat Guru once again. This insistence means simultaneously the absence of Brahmin Gurus and their teachings in Liṅgāyatism.

2.3.1 Worship of small Liṅga placing it either on palm or on an altar was in vogue in the pre-Basava period. But the Kāḷāmukhas and the Pāśupatas who practised it were dualists, as they did not regard it as an emblem of their soul or as

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essentially identical to Śiva. They did not wear the emblem, but kept it in a box after the worship. Basavaṇṇa insisted on wearing it always. He held that the Iṣṭa-liṅga is the symbol of soul which is essentially Śiva and taught monism of soul, God and the world.

2.3.2 The *Pāramēśvara Āgama*[53] declares that

> **". . . among the animals humans are superior; Brahmins among humans, those well-versed in the Vēdas among Brahmins, those who perform sacrifices among the well versed in the Vēdas, among them the Vēdāntins, Pāśupatas among the Vēdāntins, Liṅga-wearers among the Pāśupatas . . ." are superior.**

From this it follows that the Liṅga-wearers were Brahmins who performed sacrifices and rituals. It is true that many Brahmins were converted to Liṅgāyatism but once converted they ceased to be Brahmins. Basavaṇṇa and Cennabasavaṇṇa show their deep contempt to the Āgamic Śaivas by calling them Bhavi-Śaivas or Śaiva Karmis (the Śaivas who are born repeatedly)[54].

2.4 The Jaṅgama of Śaivism had no profession and depended on begging. He exploited people's belief that Jaṅgamas are incarnations of Śiva and made unholy demands of them, such as human flesh, their wives, etc. Basavaṇṇa rejects this definition of Jaṅgama and gives three new meanings. Any human (as he is a moving Liṅga), anyone who is liberated and anyone whose function (Kāyaka) is to mend people religiously and morally are Jaṅgamas. He should not beg (see *Aṣṭāvaraṇas*).

2.5 Prasāda: Prasāda traditionally meant a morsel of food distributed in a temple by a priest among devotees. The devotees who belonged to lower castes could not worship or make their own Prasāda. But Basava made a revolutionary change in the concept. Having given Iṣṭa-liṅga to all his followers without discrimination of caste or gender, he asked them to offer food to Liṅga and make it Prasāda. More

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importantly, he asked them to regard not only food but all physical things, objects of senses (like smell, sound, etc.), our senses, motor organs and inner instruments as Prasāda. He taught that regarding all things as Prasāda is a way of losing selfishness and becoming eligible for liberation.

It is specifically for these reasons that he is described by both Allama Prabhu, Cennabasavaṇṇa and others as one who descended to earth to erase the defects of Guru, Liṅga, Jaṅgama and Prasāda[55] and formulate new concepts for the welfare of mankind.

3. Social Philosophy

3.1 Basavanna attracted the people of all sects and converted them to Liṅgāyatism which insisted on eradication of caste discrimination. He held that all those who wear Linga are superior and equal, and all those do not wear Linga, though Brahmins are equal to untouchables[56].

3.2 The Vēdic culture held Brahmin's profession, performing sacrifices and rituals, higher than other professions. Basavanna and others argued that if both the professions of a Brahmin and an acrobat aim at earning livelihood, why should the former be regarded as high and the latter as low?

3.3 The Vēdas denied women the opportunity of performing sacrifices and the opportunity of wearing sacred thread, on the ground of her impurity caused by monthly period (menstruation). Basavaṇṇa argued that if a woman wears Iṣṭa-liṅga, she is as pure as man and even during her periods, she should worship Iṣṭa-liṅga. He also rejected the traditional practice of impurities (sūtakas).

3.4 Basavaṇṇa insisted that every able bodied person must earn more and distribute the excess among the have-nots, who are different forms of Liṅga. One who refuses to donate money or things to them and engages only in worshipping Iṣṭa-liṅga is not completely religious.

4. Reconciliation between Renunciation and Self-indulgence: The Vēdic culture holds high the life of

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renunciation and advised people to live a secluded life of renunciation in a forest in spiritual pursuit. In opposition, Basavaṇṇa holds that one can pursue spiritual goals without renouncing family or social responsibilities. His advice is that since renouncing sensual pleasure leads to bodily and mental illness, one can like Siriyāḷa and Ceṅgaḷe, be great Śiva-devotees without renouncing conjugal happiness[57]. Whatever happiness comes to one's lot he must enjoy as Prasāda[58].

Many object that some of the doctrines of Basavaṇṇa's Liṅgāyatism were already in vogue and that he only reformed them. It is true. But he, like founders of other religions, has reformed old beliefs and practices to suit the new situation. For example, Liṅga worship was already there. But we have to note the following.

1 Earlier anybody could get Iṣṭa-liṅga by initiation. Just as one who wanted to become a Yōgi had to learn Yōga from a good teacher of Yōga, one who wanted to have Iṣṭa-liṅga could have a Liṅga by means of initiation. For example, some Pāśupatas and Kāḷāmukhas, who were both Brahmins worshipped Iṣṭa-liṅga. But the practice was not a necessary part of Pāśupata or Kāḷāmukha sect as a whole or any other religion. But Basavaṇṇa made it a necessary part of his new faith, such that a Liṅgāyat should wear it and one who wears it becomes a Liṅgāyat. Otherwise, there is no reason why such an old practice had no religious nomenclature.

2 Basavaṇṇa made a new combination of old beliefs and practices in order to make a new and separate religion.

We should also note that no new religion is entirely new, but is only a reformation of the old. Christianity, for example, is a reformation over Judaism. Liṅgāyatism is a reformation over some sects of Śaivism and founding it is comparable to the construction of a new car out of the already existing parts. The parts left to themselves have no importance, but get importance when assembled in particular relation to other parts to make a new car. The earlier doctrines of Śiva, Guru, Liṅga, Jaṅgama and Prasāda were reformed and were

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made a necessary part of new religion, which denounced discrimination of caste, gender and profession.

3 It must again be noted that although he borrowed some of the existing beliefs and practices of the Vēdic and Āgamic culture in order to make a new religion and reformed them, they were no more Vēdic or Āgamic in the new garb.

We cannot forget that it was because of his new anti-Vēdic stand that he was exiled and his associates were killed or driven out of Kalyāṇa.

All these arguments go to prove beyond doubt that Basavaṇṇa is the founder of a new faith, Liṅgāyatism.

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CHAPTER FOUR:

CONCEPT OF GOD

The Vacanakāras have used many terms to refer to God of their concept. Of them some of the most frequently used are 'Liṅga', 'Śiva', 'Paraśiva' 'Paravastu', 'Bayalu' 'Sthala' and 'Arivu'; occasionally they use terms like 'Śaṅkara', 'Hara', 'Nandi-vāhana', 'Candra-dhara','Gaurī-vallabha', 'Rudra', etc. There are specific reasons why the ultimate reality should be called by these terms. The word 'Śiva' or 'Śaṅkara' which etymologically means one who bestows good means one who bestows liberation (Mōkṣa), the highest good. The word 'Liṅga' which etymologically means symbol applies either to the Liṅga installed in temples or the Iṣṭa-liṅga which a Liṅgāyat or a Vīraśaiva wears on his or her body and worships. It is symbol of the ultimate reality, Śiva. Māyidēva offers a fanciful etymological interpretation of the term 'Liṅga': 'li' means that in which all things ultimately merge (*līna*) and 'ga' means the thing from which all things emerge (*gamana*)[1]. One may accept the etymology or reject it, but what it means is that Liṅga or Śiva is the origin and end of all things. Similarly, the word 'sthala' which is divided into '*stha*' and '*la*' means the source from which all things proceed (stha) and into which all things merge at the time of laya (retraction) (la), respectively[2].

The Vacanakāras use the word 'Arivu' (consciousness) or 'Bayalu' (space) or 'Cid-bayalu' (consciousness-space), a Kannada word, which is synonymous with the Sanskrit word 'Cidākāśa' or 'Cidambara' or 'Sthala'. That this use is appropriate can be shown as follows. Paraśiva (Arivu or consciousness), like space, is boundless. All things, whatever their size, shape and nature, are extended in space. As there are no objects which

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are outside space, it follows that space must be bigger than the world. Similarly, Paraśiva, the infinite consciousness includes in himself all finite things and the physical space that contains them. Secondly, all objects must be in space such that we cannot imagine a physical object which is not in space. But there can be space without any object in it. Similarly, we cannot imagine a world which is not in Paraśiva, the consciousness-space (cid-bayalu), while we can imagine Paraśiva without any object in him. In fact, in the pre-creation state there was only Cid-bayalu without any object in it. In other words, Śiva is the Ādhāra (substratum) of all existence. Or, he is all-inclusive. Thirdly, Paraśiva, like space, is pure. Space often appears to be dirty and hazy because of dust, clouds, smoke, fog, etc. But the existence of these things cannot make space really dirty, hazy, etc. Similarly, dirty people and things, evil things, etc. cannot make Paraśiva impure. Human beings who are identified with Paraśiva may be defiled in their earthly (Bhava) life. But their souls are in no way defiled. If they were really defiled nothing would have made them pure and would never have been liberated. Fourthly, Paraśiva, like space, is indivisible. He is called Niṣkala-liṅga (Liṅga indivisible). Limited things appear to divide space, like space in house, space in pot, etc. But, once the limited adjuncts like pots and houses are destroyed the limited parts of space become one and partless. Similarly, Paraśiva, the infinite consciousness appears to be divided as limited souls. But, according to Liṅgāyatism, plurality and diversity of souls are only appearances and not real and souls are essentially identical like gold in different golden ornaments. Bayalu is the same in all living and non-living beings. Liṅgāyatism, unlike Śaiva Siddhānta, upholds the oneness of consciousness.

The terms Vacanakāras have used to refer to the highest reality are of two kinds - philosophical terms, like Liṅga, Mahāliṅga, Vastu (The Thing), Paravastu (The Transcendent Thing), Bayalu (Space), Cid-bayalu (Consciousness-space), Śūnya (Void), Mahāśūnya (The Great Void), etc. and terms which have religious significance, such as Śiva, Paraśiva,

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Candra-dhara (Wearer of Moon), Nandi-vāhana (Bull-rider), Rudra and the like. Though they do not recognise Kailāsa, the abode of mythological Śiva, or his mythological characteristics, they do use terms like Śiva, Paraśiva, etc., either because they are habituated to such use or because such a use is understandable to others. But they are clear that mythological Śiva is not their God. Cauḍayya, the ferryman, for example, says,

> **No garland of human skulls is worn by God, nor has he trident and drum; nor does he smear his body with sacred ashes; . . . being such a one by what name can he be addressed? He has no name whatsoever[3].**

The Vacanakāras have also used terms such as 'Kūḍala Saṅgamadēva', 'Guhēśvara', 'Cenna Mallikārjuna', etc. to apply to God in the form of signatures used at the end of each of their Vacanas. When Basavaṇṇa addresses his ideas, feelings, requests to God as Kūḍala Saṅgamadēva, he talks, not to God whose abode is Kūḍala Saṅgama, a place in the modern Bagalkot District, but to God who is omnipresent, omniscient, omnipotent, etc. Taken in this sense, the signatures which appear to be proper names are not real proper names. In fact, the Vacanakāras often say that God has no proper name and to assign him a proper name is both ignorance and irreligiousness[4], simply because we use proper names such as Ashok, Charles, Ibrahim, Mallappa, etc. to distinguish one from the other and as Gods cannot be many we do not have the necessity of distinguishing one from other.

Before creation God is simply Bayalu or Cid-bayalu (space or consciousness-space). The Sanskrit word 'Liṅga' means symbol, emblem or mark. The generative organs of male and female are respective marks of their genders. Many westerners, on noticing the images resembling the female generative organ, arrived at the conclusion that the early Indian aborigines, being uncultured, were worshippers of female generative organ. Perhaps they argued that since children are important and women bore children their organ was worthy of

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worship. They were ignorant of the fact that the symbol of female organ was symbol of universal mother, the mother of all that exists. That in worshipping the symbol of female organ people were in fact worshipping the universal mother is evidenced from the sculpture of a woman from whose generative organ a branch of tree is emerging. The westerners' conclusion, therefore, is ridiculous. Most probably, this cult later evolved into the Śākta cult of Mother Goddess.

That in ancient India there were also worshippers of the phallus erectus is evidenced from the sculpture at Gudimallam (first century A.D.) and of erect phallus, called Bāṇa-liṅga at Mathura (second century A.D.). Again, the westerners concluded that the uncultured Indians were phallus worshippers. But the fact is that what they worshipped was a symbol of universal father, Śiva. That though it is the woman who bears child the cause of the child is father seems to be the presupposition behind the sculptor's imagination that phallus should be the symbol of Śiva. A careful reading of the Purāṇas reveals that phallus is the symbol, not of any other God but of Śiva. Unfortunately, the writers of the Purāṇas instead of identifying Śiva and Liṅga (the symbol) have described Liṅga as Liṅga (phallus) of Śiva. Even the Vēdic people disparaged the worshippers of Śiva as phallus worshippers (Śiśna-dēvāḥ). In any case, Liṅga is not worshipped as Liṅga (phallus) of Śiva, but as an emblem of universal father, Śiva. No worshipper of Śiva (Liṅga) ever gets the idea that Liṅga is phallus.

Installed Liṅga, which the Kashmir Śaivas and the Tamil Śaivas worship is the symbol, not only of Śiva, the male principle, but also of his spouse Pārvatī (or (Śakti), the female principle. The image consists of mainly two parts, the cylindrical shaped Liṅga, called Gōlaka, representing the male principle and the lower part to which the Gōlaka is fixed, called Yōni, representing the female principle (the part still lower is called Pīṭha, the stand which supports the two parts). This conception seems to be more rational being based on the argument that just as for the birth of a child both father and mother are necessary, so for the birth of the universe of living and non-

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living beings both Śiva and Pārvatī are necessary. This inextricable relation between the two is sometimes symbolised as Ardha-nārīśvara.

In philosophical parlance the male principle is called consciousness (Śiva) and the female principle represents matter (Śakti). The necessity of both for creation becomes intelligible when we compare the concept with two other theories. As the Advaita of Śaṅkara and Vijñānavāda of Buddhism hold consciousness alone as real they cannot explain the world except as illusory. Similarly, the Cārvākas recognise the reality of matter and treat consciousness as its bye-product, thus denying its independent existence. While Advaita and Vijñānavāda reject the necessity of a material cause, the Cārvākas reject the necessity of an efficient cause, of the world. The Jainas and the Sāṅkhyas recognise the necessity of both matter and consciousness, but they do not recognise the necessity of a relation between the two for the evolution of the world. Only theists, including Liṅgāyats, have recognised the necessity of material and efficient causes and a particular relation between the two.

ATTRIBUTES OF PARAŚIVA

The Vacanakāras, like the Vēdāntins, describe Paraśiva as having five attributes, sat (reality), cit (consciousness), ānanda (bliss), nitya (eternality) and paripūrṇa (all-pervasiveness). In fact, these are the very essence of Paraśiva, such that we cannot imagine him without them[5].

1. *CIT*

Since the essence of Paraśiva is consciousness he is often called Arivu, Cinmaya (full of consciousness) or Cid-ghana (supreme consciousness). Paraśiva is not just one of the conscious beings, but the consciousness present in all living and non-living beings. In other words, Paraśiva is the Viśvātma (universal soul). When a human being is said to have consciousness it obviously implies that he, as a subject, is conscious of the world, its object. But though Paraśiva is

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conscious of the world, his way of knowing it is different from the human way. A human being perceives an object as different from himself and as external, by means of senses and the inner instruments. But Paraśiva perceives the world intellectually and as being in himself. The divine intellectual perception can broadly be compared to our own intellectual perception of our ideas, decisions and feelings. No Vacana corroborates this idea directly, but that is precisely what is implied when Paraśiva is described as Bayalu or Cid-bayalu. When Basavaṇṇa says Paraśiva is everywhere and has thousand eyes, thousand feet, thousand mouths[6] he means that Paraśiva is able to know all things. However, we should not interpret these epithets as meaning that Paraśiva actually has eyes of some kind, which he uses for knowing things.

The individual souls which are parts of consciousness, according to Liṅgāyats, have no real or independent existence. Strictly speaking, they are not parts, as consciousness cannot be cut into separable parts. Yet empirically they are considered as separate due to the fact that they have conditions like bodies, senses, intellects, etc. Due to these conditions they have various degrees of intelligence, various kinds of knowledge, various emotions, various living conditions, etc. Once these conditions perish, as they do because of intense spiritual discipline, they merge into the universal soul, Paraśiva, like rivers merging in an ocean. This state is called Mōkṣa (liberation). But in the Bhava or Saṃsāra (empirical existence), all individual souls due to their ignorance (marevu), believe wrongly that they are all different from one another and from Paraśiva. A being may be man or woman, Indian or non-Indian, Muslim or not, rich or poor, but the soul that is in it, has no gender and other accidents[7]. Often to drive home this point the Vacanakāras employ the analogy of gold and gold ornaments. Rings, bangles, chains and other ornaments have different shapes and sizes, but the material, gold, out of which they are made is the same; similarly, the individual souls (Aṅgas) which have all sprung up from Liṅga, their common source, cannot be different from Liṅga[8].

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Taken in this sense, distinguishing between the individual souls as limited consciousness and Paraśiva as unlimited consciousness is simply a futile exercise, based on the wrong presupposition that individual souls have reality. Consciousness is just one, unlimited, illimitable and indivisible. It goes without saying that consciousness which Paraśiva is is all-pervasive so that there is no place or being in which it is not present. But while the consciousness present in humans and other living beings like trees and plants can experience happiness and unhappiness, the same present in stones, water, etc. cannot experience any feeling or respond to the external stimuli in any manner, simply because stones, water, etc. do not have the required cognitive apparatus like senses, mind, etc. which the living beings have. Just as there may be space without objects in it, so also there may be consciousness without material object in it. It is aviraḷa (not sparse). As consciousness cannot be divided like physical objects, it is also called Niṣkala-liṅga (Impartite Liṅga).

2. *SAT*

We notice that things and ourselves are changing continuously. But from this the Vacanakāras, unlike the Buddhists, do not conclude that continuous flux is reality. On the contrary, they argue that behind the continuous change there is something unchanging and permanent. That is God (Paraśiva). This is same as saying that Liṅga is *sat.*

Liṅga is sat in the sense that his original nature does not change while other qualities may or may not change. While, for example, his attribute as creator or destroyer of the world changes, his nature as infinite consciousness does not. Sometimes the Vacanakāras compare the relation between God and the world made of Śakti to that between the sea and its waves. Just as the waves are modes of sea, so the world is a mode of Liṅga and while the waves continuously come and go, the sea remains the same. Similarly, the changes in the world do not affect the original nature of Liṅga.

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Those who hold sense perception alone as valid source of knowledge may object that we perceive only continuous change and never the underlying reality. They may even argue that reality is just a figment of imagination. Even the big mountains, the stars and the planets which have been appearing to be the same are really changing, though slowly, minutely and occasionally imperceptibly.

The rationalist conception of sat, underlying the constant flux of changes is the result of a logical distinction between qualities and substance which is the substratum of qualities. While we are able to perceive qualities empirically we will never perceive the substance. The assumption, therefore, that there is substance which is different from, and basis of, qualities has no correspondence to reality. Searching for substance without quality is a futile exercise. Constant flux alone is reality. As Heracleitus said long ago nobody can step into the same river twice, because by the time one steps into the river for the second time the earlier waters have moved further, so that the river is not the same and the person himself has changed a lot so that he is not the same person, either.

This empiricist view advanced by the Buddhist Kṣaṇikavādins and Heracleitus is wrong for it defies both common sense and logic. Their position is denied by the Vacanakāras. The Vacanakāras reiterate the point that there is an unchanging reality (sat) behind the constant changes. Śaṅkara would have regarded the world and the changes in it as illusory (mithyā). But the Vacanakāras do recognise the reality of both Paraśiva and his transformation as world. The sea changes its modes (waves, bubbles, etc.) and yet its basic nature as sea does not change. Just as it is illogical to hold only waves, vapour, bubbles, etc. come and go and there is no sea at all, so also it is illogical to hold that only the world appearances come and go and there is no Paraśiva who is the substratum of the world. In fact, it would be better to say it is Paraśiva who is constantly appearing as the different things of the world without losing his original nature. It is interesting to note that the Vacanakāras use the word 'Vastu' or 'Paravastu'

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for God to emphasize the point that God is the enduring substance which underlies the continuous flux.

While the changes and the unchanging things are amenable to sense perception, Paraśiva, who is Sat-cit remains imperceptible. His imperceptible presence is the subject matter of many Vacanas[9]. However, while Paraśiva is imperceptible to others, he is amenable to direct experience (aparōkṣānubhava) of the mystics (Liṅgānubhāvis).

3. *ĀNANDA*

Ānanda or bliss is not something God derives externally - it is his very nature, like reality and consciousness. Therefore, the possible objection, "Why should Paraśiva who is nitya-tṛpta (eternally contented) try to get some more bliss?" is rendered redundant. That he is eternally blissful can be inferred from the fact that, Aṅga who becomes Liṅga, in the mystic state, enjoys incomparable bliss (Ānanda). But though Ānanda is natural to Aṅga, the possible Liṅga, it is not felt by him, as long as he is caught in the cycle of Saṃsāra, because in each birth he experiences a host of sufferings which are the result of his past selfish Karma. Once knowledge dawns on him, he begins to abstain from the proscriptions such as lust, anger, infatuation, etc. which are caused by selfishness. Deep devotion to Paraśiva, moral determination and Yogic practice lead him to realise his original nature as Paraśiva, i.e., Sat, Cit and Ānanda.

If Ānanda is the very nature of Paraśiva, it follows that one who suffers is not Paraśiva. Mythologies tell us that Śiva of mythology suffered at the hands of his own devotees (e.g. Rāvaṇa, Bhasmāsura), Brahma lost his fifth head and Rāma and Kṛṣṇa suffered in many ways in their Avatāras. Therefore, none of them deserve to be called God[10]. They are obviously rejected by the Vacanakāras.

4. *NITYA* (Eternal)

The word 'nitya' (eternal) in the Vacana context means beginningless and endless existence. Eternality is an essential characteristic of Paraśiva and according to Liṅgāyats, one who

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is not eternal does not deserve to be called God. Basavaṇṇa says,

Indra was born of Amṛtavati and Sōmaśambhu;
Brahma was born of Satayaṛṣi and Jyēṣṭhādēvi;
Viṣṇu was born of Vasudēva and Dēvaki;
. . . The three worlds know that
These are womb-born.
Tell me, does Kūḍala Saṅgamadēva
Who transcends creation, maintenance
And retraction have parents?[11]

This Vacana contains two arguments, though concealed, (1) that if Indra, Brahma, Viṣṇu, etc. are born they cannot be called God, for the obvious reason that they lack eternality and (2) that God exists prior to creation and after retraction. Applying the second argument to the first we can argue that as Brahma, Indra, Viṣṇu, etc. are not creators, nor continue to be after retraction none of them deserves to be called God. Brahma who is said to create may live longer than others, but being himself created by God he ceases to exist after retraction. Similarly, Viṣṇu who is said to maintain the world as long as it is exists is himself created and ceases to exist after retraction. The same is the case with Rudra who is said to destroy the world.

Some people may object that the Vacanakāras' position that Paraśiva becomes the world contradicts the idea of his eternality. To substantiate their position they may cite the example of a seed which ceases to exist after becoming a tree. But while the argument related to the seed is true, the same cannot be true about God's becoming the world. If God and the world were identical, he, like the seed, would have ceased to exist after becoming the world. But as the aforesaid Vacana says, Paraśiva transcends the creation, sustenance and retraction of the world. Allama Prabhu asks, "If God also dies, how is he different from humans?"[12]

The Vacanakāras believe that Paraśiva has created Brahma the creator, Viṣṇu the maintainer and Rudra the

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destroyer innumerable times in the past, i.e., no creation is first and no destruction is last. To create and destroy the world cyclically Paraśiva must be eternal (nitya)[13].

5. *PARIPŪRṆA* (ALL-PERVASIVE)

Another equally important characteristic of Paraśiva is his all-pervasiveness (paripūrṇatā). When Tōṇṭada Siddhaliṅga Śivayōgi asks, "Is Śiva paripūrṇa (all-pervasive) or khaṇḍita (a part divided)?"[14] he is using the two terms as contrary to each other. The assumption is that a part cannot be all-pervasive. Physical things, however large, cannot be all-pervasive. The supreme consciousness, like space, is indivisible (akhaṇḍita). In a sense, it is true that the world which is self-transformation of Paraśiva is divisible and that, Paraśiva, consciousness, is not divisible. Even if we take Paraśiva, the infinite consciousness qualified by Śakti, which becomes the world at the behest of Paraśiva, he still remains indivisible and all-pervasive.

Tamil Śaivas may argue that the idea that God who is pure and supreme exists in filthy places and wicked hearts is repugnant, but Tōṇṭada Siddhaliṅga Śivayōgi does not accept the theory that Śiva's purity and supremacy are contrary to his all-pervasiveness. Perhaps, the mythological theory that Śiva abides in Kailāsa, a corner in the universe, may cohere with the objection. But since the Vacanakāras propose that Śiva is smaller than the smallest and greater than the greatest[15], his omnipresence is not in the least affected by the presence of impurities and wickedness. While other Vacanakāras think that God exists in the form of the whole world, or he is the form of world[16], Allma says,

> **You are in the mountains, caves**
> **And valleys and in the fields and lands,**
> **Without touching them.**
> **You are unthinkable and imperceptible;**
> **You are there everywhere . . .**[17]

Similarly, Basavaṇṇa says that in whichever direction one looks, one sees only God – God has eyes, mouths, arms, feet

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everywhere[18]. God's boundless existence includes the sun, the moon, Rudra, Viṣṇu, Brahma, Indra, etc[19]. He alone is supreme in heaven, hell and the mortal world[20].

But these statements lead to a problem. If God exists in every material thing, does it not mean that he is different from the material things in which he manifests? Does it not further mean that these objects delimit his existence? If his existence is delimited how can he be called omnipresent? How can God having limited existence be called God? In what sense is he different from the world which also has limited existence? This objection which looks formidable can be answered as follows. While the dualists like the Mādhvas and the Śaiva Siddhāntins, hold that the matter out of which God creates the world is different from God, like clay which is different from the potter who creates pots, jugs, etc. from it, the Vacanakāras hold that Paraśiva is himself a complex of consciousness and matter (Śakti) (Śiva-Śakti-sampuṭa), i.e., efficient and material cause. So while the objection applies to the dualists, it does not apply to the Vacanakāras, because Paraśiva and Śakti are not independent categories for them. In other words, in all places either consciousness or some form of Śakti which is its integral part exists, such that either there is no place where there is no Paraśiva, or there is nothing other than Paraśiva.

The idea of God as all-pervasive has a deep impact on true devotees. No true devotee who is convinced of God's all-pervasiveness wilfully goes to temple or visits holy places, because he knows that to visit temples or holy places is to doubt the basic Liṅgāyat doctrine of God's omnipresence. In fact, the leading Vacanakāras proscribe visit to temples and holy places.

It is important to note that God with some form, like the mythological Śiva, i.e., one with four hands, seated on a bull, etc. cannot be all-pervasive. Any object for that matter, living or non-living, divine or mortal, small or big, which has a particular form, ought to be limited in space. To have spatial limitation is to be anything but God. This is precisely why the Liṅgāyats do not conceive God as having form.

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PARAŚIVA'S OTHER CHARACTERISTICS

1. SELF-EXISTENT (SVAYAMBHŪ)

When cosmological argument is advanced for the existence of God, even an intelligent child will ask, "If God is the cause of all things, who is the cause of God?" In order to answer this question we have to necessarily contrast the divine existence with that of ordinary things. An ordinary thing's origin and continuation depend on factors other than itself. A chair is caused by wood, instruments and the carpenter and it continues to exist on conditions like weather, etc. Contrasted with this the divine existence is not caused by any external condition – it exists all by itself (Svayambhū). Kṛṣṇa, Indra, Brahma, Rudra, etc., the so called gods, have birth as their birth is caused by their respective parents, but Paraśiva, being eternal, has no parents. The inversion of this is that if Paraśiva has parents, he is no God and the Vacanakāras offer many Vacanas to this effect. Of course, there are Vacanas to the effect that Svayambhū has evolved from the state of Śūnya. Allama Prabhu calls the self-existent Paraśiva 'child without mother and father, born of yourself'[21]. We must note the difference between evolution and birth. When it is said Paraśiva evolved from Bayalu, the formless Ultimate Reality, it is a change of one form from another form, while birth of a person implies birth from parents who are different from him. If we suppose that Paraśiva is born of his parents, we are forced to think not only that he is different from his parents, but also that their parents got their birth from their parents, and so on ad infinitum. Secondly, a Paraśiva who is not Svayambhū and eternal is no God at all.

2. INCORPOREAL (AŚARĪRI)

There are two kinds of Vacanas, (1) those which speak of the eight units (the five material elements, the sun, the moon and the soul) and (2) those which speak of 36 principles, as the building blocks of the universe. However, both treat the world as the body of Paraśiva. Conceiving Paraśiva as having some kind of body has worried some Vacanakāras, like Cennabasavaṇṇa and others. Cennabasavaṇṇa says:

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Saying God has eight-fold body is blasphemy.
Is he hard like earth, fluid like water?
Does he stop burning in the absence of hey or firewood?
Does he move like wind? Is he void like space?
Does he make day and night like the sun and the moon?
Is he subject to birth and death like the bound self?
Therefore, Kūḍala Cennasaṅgayya, you are like yourself
And all else as you will[22].

Similarly, Ṣaṇmukha Svāmi asks,

We should not listen to the words
Of the wretched renegades who claim
That God is eight-fold bodied.
If you ask me what the reason is,
I will tell you:
If earth is God, does it dissolve
In the deluge?
If water is God does it evaporate
In the fire of destruction? . . .
If the moon and the sun are God
Do they get caught in the cycle of birth and death?
If this is so, how can I say
The eight-fold body is God? . . .[23]

Another Śaraṇa, Ajagaṇṇa, argues that since the five elements evolve from one another during creation and involve into one another during retraction, it follows that they cannot be said to be God as the cosmic processes of evolution and involution do not apply to God[24].

But all the three arguments are based on a failure to distinguish between the idea that God is eight-fold body and the idea that God has eight-fold body. If the Vacanakāras hold a pantheistic idea that Paraśiva and the world are identical these objections would have been valid. But the Vacanakāras hold a panentheistic idea that the world is fully penetrated by God

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and also that God transcends and includes the world. So, if somebody says Paraśiva has an eight-fold body it is only formal, because the eight units are always dependent on Paraśiva, and independently of Paraśiva they cannot exist[25]. The eight units depend on Paraśiva as qualities depend on a substance. Moreover, Paraśiva can exist without a body (the world), as for example, in the pre-creation state.

Viśiṣṭādvaitins say that world of living and non-living beings is the body and God is its soul. The Vacanakāras' position is the same, though their expression is not clear or vocal. Basavaṇṇa describes Paraśiva's body as having eye, feet, mouths, everywhere, Rudra in his face, Viṣṇu in his shoulders, Indra in his feet, thirty-three crore gods in his head, the earth under his feet, etc[26]. But that description is not at all similar to Paraśiva's description in a painting as having four hands, wearing garlands of snake and skulls, tiger skin, etc. But while the religious people may value the painting philosophers do not. For them the idea of Paraśiva as embodied is metaphorical or formal (aupacārika) and not real.

3. PERSONAL (VYAKTI)

Is God of Liṅgāyatism personal? Or, is he impersonal like the featureless, formless and inactive Brahman of Advaita? Some may prefer to say that the answer, curiously, is both – exclusively, no and mutually, yes. To affirm the personality of Paraśiva on the ground that he creates, maintains and destroys the universe is to contradict the idea that Paraśiva, as Bayalu, was not aware of anything including himself. Therefore, it is proper to conclude that Paraśiva was impersonal when he was Bayalu or Śūnya and also that, after becoming Paraśiva, he was a person. Strictly speaking, Paraśiva is always person. Just as the decision to create and do other cosmic functions makes him a person, the decision to return to the Bayalu state makes him a person. If the absence of the ability to make decisions is the characteristic of Nirguṇa (featureless) Brahman, the presence of that characteristic must make him a person. To put it briefly, both decision to act and decision not to act are the decisions of Paraśiva. This becomes clear when Uriliṅga Peddi says:

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Śiva is able to become the world
And also not to become the world;
Śiva is able to assume forms
And also able not to assume forms;
Śiva is able to create innumerable worlds
And also able not to create innumerable worlds . . .[27]

When God is not creating perhaps he is inactive. But that is according to his decision. When he is inactive we cannot call him featureless (nirguṇa). Because when he is inactive he knows when he should begin the new creation. The decision to create is not an unconscious or fortuitous act. Therefore, he is personal even while he is inactive as when he is active.

4. OMNIPOTENT (SARVAŚAKTA)

That the Vacanakāras hold Paraśiva as omnipotent (Sarvaśakta) is evident from their Vacanas which are of two kinds – those which speak of his ability to transform himself in innumerable ways and those which speak of his special acts, like miracles.

The God of Liṅgāyatism, unlike the featureless, formless and inactive Brahman of Advaita, is qualified by Śakti, by virtue of which he is able to transform himself in innumerable ways. Ādayya, a well-known Vacanakāra, says,

Our Saurāṣṭra Sōmēśvara-liṅga can have
Features and also be featureless
And can be simultaneously featured and featureless;
He can become the smallest,
He can become the biggest
And also become simultaneously
The smallest and the biggest;
He can become Śiva and the self
And also become simultaneously the self and Śiva
. . .
He can become all,
He can become the One
And he can become both simultaneously . . .[28]

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Ṣaṇmukha Svāmi says,

Our Śiva can create innumerable millions
Of worlds in a minute,
And also destroy all of them in a minute . . .[29]

Paraśiva does not leave the world for itself after its creation. He has to maintain it in a proper way. The world is under his control as a machine is under the control of a mechanic[30].

Paraśiva can also exhibit his omnipotence in special circumstances. Basavaṇṇa says,

If you grace, a log will sprout;
If you grace, a barren cow will milch;
If you grace, poison will become nectar . . .[31]

It is not easy to get rid of the old sins, if one depends only on human efforts. But with the grace of God what is impossible becomes possible[32].

5. FREE (SVATANTRA)

During the Śūnya state Paraśiva is devoid of all features. But when he becomes aware of himelf his Śakti, which was inactive till then, becomes his nature and conscious. In other words, he (consciousness) and Śakti gain each other's nature. Now he is not merely Jñāna (knowledge), but also Kriyā (dynamism). His acts are variegated.

1. **Śiva can choose to transform into the world**
   And can also choose not to transform into the world;
   Śiva can choose to assume forms
   And can also choose not to assume forms;
   Śiva can choose to make innumerable worlds
   And also choose not to make them . . .[33]

2. **Having no birth or change you remained**
   Self-existent in the Śūnya state!
   Like seed and tree, you have become both form and formless;
   You have become the origin, for all forms . . .[34]

3. **The Great Creator created the world for the sport of his Śakti;**

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He created for his sport innumerable worlds,
The moon, the sun, the stars, thunder and lightning,
Death, karma, dissolution,
Males and females in humans and lower animals,
Position, pleasure, life-span, sleep and various other things;
None can understand the laws the machine maker made . . .[35]

All his cosmic activities mentioned in the above Vacanas (and many more) suggest that he is free to act or not to act, free to create or not to create and materialise what his free will (Icchā-śakti) decides. He is not compelled by any external stimulus, as at that time there was nothing other than himself, and, even if there were, his freedom to act the way he decided would not be thwarted, because he is omnipotent by nature. Nor was he impelled by any inner desire or instinct to act in a particular way, because he has no selfish desire or instinct that would force him to act in a particular way. He had unrestricted freedom to transform himself in innumerable ways according to his knowledge (jñāna-śakti) and free will (icchā-śakti).

ŚAKTI AND ITS RELATION TO PARAŚIVA

From the three Vacanas quoted just above we can draw three conclusions: 1. that Brahman or Śiva is not the featureless, formless and inactive Brahman of Advaita, but the creator, ruler and destroyer of the world; 2. that if he performs these activities he must necessarily possess energy (Śakti) and 3. that since Śiva has been performing one or the other activity at every point of time from the beginningless past he must be regarded to possess infinite energy or omnipotence.

In order to justify their view that Śiva is qualified by boundless Śakti Vacanakāras have carefully considered the possible objections. One such objection is that since the world of sentient and non-sentient beings has been existing since time immemorial in one form or the other we need not posit the existence of a creator. To this objection raised by the Pāśupatas and Jains Tōṇṭada Siddhaliṅga Śivayōgi replies that if one

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contends that the world is eternal, the individuality of the soul, Māyā and other impurities are also eternal and that if they are eternal, they cannot be destroyed and Mōkṣa cannot be attained. But the fact is that they can be destroyed as they are not eternal. Only Śiva is eternal. He also advances the textual evidence that Śiva performs five functions, creation, etc., which means that the world has been created innumerable times already[36]. What he means is that he created the physical world and Māyā out of his own Śakti which was with him indistinguishably. Even if we regarded Śiva as creator in the sense in which a potter can be called creator of pots, jugs, etc. it necessarily implies that Śiva must be qualified by Śakti. The rational basis for such a position is that there was a time when the world did not exist and now it exists, and therefore, it was created by creator. Even if the world pre-existed unmanifest, it requires for its manifestation the help of a conscious agent who must necessarily possess Śakti. Whether the world is an entirely new product or only a new form of the old product, the conclusion that Śiva by his own creative power brought it into existence is irresistible.

Those who want to see the Liṅgāyat metaphysics in the Advaitic colours may object that the Vacanakāras use the word Māyā quite often and if they conceive the world as Māyā as the Advaitins do, then we need not construe Śiva as creator, etc. or as possessing Śakti. In reply it can be said that though it is true that the Vacanakāras employ the word 'Māyā' quite often, they employ, not in the Advaitic sense, but in other senses. For example, when it is said that the world and man are made of Māyā-śakti or Adhō-māyā, it means that the material cause of world and man is Kalā-śakti, the Śakti which induces man to engage in worldly activities. Used in this sense, Māyā-śakti is a real material cause of the universe and man, not *mithyā* (neither real nor unreal). Again, the word 'Ūrdhva-māyā' is also used to refer to Bhaktis which cause liberation of man. Similarly, the word is sometimes used to mean ignorance or wrong conception of the world. It is right to think that the world is permeated by Śiva or that it is a self-manifestation (not appearance) of Śiva

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and wrong to think that the world is distinct from Śiva. Therefore, whoever describes Paraśiva as creator, destroyer, etc. cannot use the word 'Māyā' as the Advaitins do. When Allama Prabhu says that woman, gold and land are not Māyā, but desire for them is Māyā, he, like other Vacanakāras, identifies Māyā with desire emanating from ignorance[37].

MEANING OF ŚAKTI

The word 'Śakti' is ordinarily used in the Vacanas in three senses. It is used in the sense of power (bala) by virtue of which the possessor of Śakti is able to perform certain functions. The word, however, is also used occasionally in the sense of potency by virtue of which the possessor of potency produces or becomes capable of producing (other conducive conditions granted) certain results *out of itself/himself/herself.* A potter is a said to possess Śakti or power of operating on a lump of clay and transforming it into a pot, jug, etc., whereas a seed possesses the Śakti or potency of becoming a plant. In other words, as a power it is an *attribute* by virtue of which the possessor of power is entitled to be called an efficient cause; and Śakti as potency is an *entity* by virtue of which the possessor of potency is entitled to be called a material or substantial cause.

It must be further noted that just because a potter has power he cannot be said to possess the potency of producing a pot - such potency lies in the clay. If one could produce things just out of his power, the God of the Mādhvas or Śaiva Siddhāntins who is described as omnipotent (sarva-śakta) should have created the world without depending on the Prakṛti and other things for his raw material. But he cannot create the world out of his bala (power) but only out of the *externally* available raw materials. Similarly, just because the clay is said to have potency it does not become pot without the exertion of an external agent. However, there are exceptions. The seed, for example, can become a tree without the help of a conscious agent at any stage of its growth. In fact, the theory of evolution and involution favoured by the Sāṅkhyas and the theory of fortuitous combination and separation of elements as causing

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creation, destruction and other kinds of changes, favoured by the Buddhists and the Cārvākas, do not presuppose the power of any conscious agent. But such a position sans efficient cause suffers from other limitations.

Prakṛti is construed in the Sāṅkhya system as Śakti in the sense of *potency* or causal substance, for it, like a seed, evolves into Buddhi, Ahaṅkāra, material elements, etc. and involves in the reverse order, whereas Śakti of Viṣṇu in the Mādhva School or Śakti of Śiva in the Śiva Siddhānta School is construed as only a *power* of an omnipotent being. Even when the Śaiva Siddhāntin defines Śakti as an instrument of Śiva he does not give it the position of Prakṛti, the material cause of the world. The omnipotence of Viṣṇu or of Śiva is restricted only to the principle that transforms the chaotic or subtle form of Prakṛti with all its hidden potencies into an orderly world.

Apart from these two senses the Vacanakāras use the word 'Śakti' to refer to a finished product. So the world, the human bodies, senses, internal instruments, etc. in this sense are products of Śakti.

In Kashmir Śaivism, Viśiṣṭādvaita and Liṅgāyatism the term Śakti is used in all the senses. In Viśiṣṭādvaita the world of Cit (souls) and Acit (matter) which forms the body of Brahman is called Śakti. For it is the causal state which develops into products and these in turn are capable of producing physical, chemical and biological changes. Such a Śakti is, however, subservient to the will of God. Its operative and quiescent forms are controlled by a more powerful being, God, just as our powerful limbs are controlled by our minds. Similarly, in Liṅgāyatism (as also in Kashmir Śaivism) Śakti means not merely a power of Śiva but his potency and this is evidenced from many Vacanas and other forms of writing on the Liṅgāyat metaphysics. For example, it is said: "The seed called Cit . . . developed into Kalā and your Śakti became Icchā-śakti, Jñāna-śakti and Kriyā-śakti and other Śaktis and as a result there were many creations . . ."[38]. Sometimes though the word Cit or Nenahu (literally, 'memory') is substituted for the word 'Śakti'

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the description wherein that word occurs unmistakably suggests that it is the seed of the phenomenal world[39]. If Śakti or Cittu were an abstract quality, like justice, redness, for example, it would not possibly contain in itself the future world; nor could it be said to be the substratum in which the world resides.

Many writers who cannot conceive Śiva except in anthropomorphic terms believe that Śakti is his spouse called variously such as 'Pārvatī', 'Umā' 'Mahēśvari', etc. Such a conception cannot, however, be philosophically defended; if Śakti is a person, then such a person must further be supposed to possess Śakti or potency to create the world, comparable to the Śakti of a woman to bear a child. If we suppose Śakti as a female with distinct existence, possessing consciousness and Śakti, we may rightly object that we can hardly ascribe creatorship to Śiva. In fact, conception of Umā as Śakti renders Śiva redundant. Even if we, like Śaiva Siddhāntins, regard her as instrumental cause, we cannot escape the objection.

Though the religious or popular conception of Śakti is philosophically indefensible, the philosophy behind it is simple, that Śiva or infinite consciousness cannot produce the world of matter and spirits without Śakti, just as a man cannot produce a child without a woman and that Śakti is not a quality but an entity or the primordial substantial cause of evolution.

RELATION OF ŚAKTI TO ŚIVA

What is the relationship of Śakti to Śiva? When faced with similar problem the Viśiṣṭādvaitins answer that the world (Śakti) and God (Brahman) are both substances and the former depends on the latter both for its existence and function. In order to show that the relation between them is like that between substance and quality (viśēṣaṇa) (though both of them are substances) they use the analogy of staff-holder (daṇḍin) and a staff (daṇḍa). The relationship between the two is accidental; nevertheless the staff-holder can be said to be qualified by the staff. Similarly, Brahman is said to be qualified by the world of Cit (souls) and Acit (matter). But unlike the relationship of the daṇḍin and daṇḍa that between Brahman and the world is

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eternal, natural and inseparable (apṛthak-siddhi). In order to stress this point Rāmānuja also uses the analogy of the body-soul relationship. The world is the body and Brahman is its soul, i.e., the world cannot exist except as depending on Brahman and Brahman cannot exist without the world.

The Vacanakāras have used at least three analogies to explain the relation of Śakti to Śiva. In *Siddhānta-śikhāmaṇī* Śakti is called '*Dharma-cāriṇī*' (wife)[40]. That is, just as the traditional faithful wife always cooperates with her husband, so Śakti (Umā), the wife of Śiva, carries out his orders faithfully and cooperates with him in his cosmic activities and cannot exist independently of Śiva. But this analogy involves certain limitations. For example, one can argue that a wife's relation to her husband, however intimate, has a beginning and end, whereas the relationship of Śakti to Śiva is beginningless and that a wife is a separate self-conscious being and her mental activities can occur independently of her husband, while Śakti is not a conscious entity and therefore, cannot have any mental activity whatsoever. Thus, while the conception of Śakti as an attribute fails to suggest the idea of productivity, the conception of Śakti as Śiva's wife fails to suggest the notion of eternal and inseparable relation with Śiva.

But we can combine the two imperfect conceptions and arrive at the following answer. We can conceive Śakti as inseparably related to Śiva just like quality to its substance and Śakti as a productive entity like a woman. Some who must have felt the need for such a combination have evolved the concept of Śiva as Ardha-nārīśvara, half-female-half-male. The concept of Ardha-nārīśvara implies that the ultimate reality is a combination of two aspects (consciousness and matter), that both of them are necessary for the creation of the world and its activities and that the association is inextricably intimate.

There is a specific reason for the necessity of both and their intimate relation. Śiva without Śakti is not any different from the Nirguṇa (featureless) Brahman of Śaṅkara and for Liṅgāyats who want to explain the real world conception of

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Nirguṇa Brahman is philosophically untenable. Similarly, the Prakṛti of the Sāṅkhya is nothing but Śakti without Śiva. But Liṅgāyats have held as equally untenable the concept of Śakti as operating without a conscious agent. If we have to explain Śakti and its operations we must necessarily conceive it as an inseparable part of Śiva and as guided and controlled by conscious Śiva. All creation accounts invariably support the idea that Śakti operates but as guided by Śiva[41].

Liṅgāyatism holds that not only the two are necessary but also that they must be related intimately, not like husband and wife, but like the two halves of Ardha-nārīśvara, like the soul and body. In fact, there are many Vacanas which suggest that the world made of the five material elements, the soul, the sun and the moon make the eight-fold body (aṣṭa-tanu) of Śiva[42].

Some Vacanakāras employ the analogy of the sea and its modes, such as waves, bubbles, etc. to describe the relationship of Śiva and world (Śakti). "In the great ocean appear foam, waves, bubbles, etc. – but can they be separate (from the ocean)? If from the ocean called Paraśiva all worlds evolve can they be separate (from Paraśiva)?[43], asks Candimarasa. Candimarasa's question involves the implicit answer that Śakti (world) is related to Śiva like bubbles, foam, waves related to the sea. The sea may exist without foam, waves and bubbles but these cannot exist without the sea. In reality the foam, the waves and the bubbles are modes of the sea and are not separate from the sea. Likewise, Śakti is a manifest form of Śiva and not an independent or separate object. From this it follows that Śiva and Śakti are one and not two. When Śiva's Śakti is unmanifest, he is called Śūnya and when he manifests it he is called Śiva-with-Śakti or Īśvara (Lord of the universe). This aspect is further clarified in the following Vacanas.

Like the pot made of clay, like the ornament made of gold,
Like hailstone made of water, the world is made of Brahman . . .[44]

The whole forest you are,

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All the Dēvadāru trees are but you,
The beasts that play in the woods are but you, O God[45]

Liṅgāyats' conception of the relation between Śiva and Śakti can be called internal or organic. Organic relationship is reciprocal like systematic relationship between different parts or organs of an organism. For example, dysfunction or defect of any one of the organs of the human body may have specific adverse impact on the working of other organs of the body. Such results do not occur in external relationships. For example, if I put a book in a bag, there ensues a temporary and external relationship between the bag and the book. Removal of the book out of the bag will not cause any change in the nature of either the book or the bag. The fact that the God the Mādhvas or Śaiva Siddhāntins who creates the world by making use of Prakṛti, Puruṣas or Paśus (individual souls) and other material causes clearly shows that the world is not his corporeal part and his relation with it is not internal or organic. The very fact that he creates the world which is distinct from him points to his external relation with it. This leads to two important philosophical problems. 1. Existence of the world delimits the omnipresence of God and a God whose existence is limited is no God. 2. If Śakti exists prior to or co-eternal with Śiva, then we have to explain it.

There is some philosophical appropriateness in conceiving Śakti as the body of Śiva and to demonstrate the veracity of this claim let us examine the two sentences, "This is my house" and "This is my body". The sentence, "This is my body", means that this body is under my control. For example, it talks and walks, whenever I wish it to talk and walk. All my wishes fully or partly, quickly or slowly, transform into the corresponding physical activities. But, when I say "This house is mine" it just means that the house is *in my possession* and does not and cannot mean that it is *under my control.* If I wish to open the window, the window does not open, unless I manually open it. My house is not under my control, *as it is not my organ.* That precisely is the reason why my wish to open

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the window is not materialized. This coheres with the Upaniṣadic position that body, senses, etc. are the instruments of the individual soul. Since I have an organic relationship with my body I can to some extent, if not to the full extent, control it. Likewise, since the world is the body of God he is called the Lord of the world (Jagadīśvara) and controls it.

It is possible to object that Śiva by his occult powers can control the world from a distance and therefore the world need not be his body. But those who advance such an objection are unaware that distinction of the world from God gives rise to many philosophical problems. If Śakti is not an organic part of Śiva, where was it situated? Who created it? Has it been co-eternal with Śiva? And so on. Therefore, the Vacanakāras's theory that Śakti was with Paraśiva inseparably seems tenable.

The Vacanakāra knows this, not by philosophical deliberation, but by mystic intuition. The mystic (Śiva-yōgi) perceives the one consciousness or vital force pulsating in all animate and inanimate beings and that just as the vital force is pulsating in all organs of our body, so consciousness hidden in every particle of the world is ever pulsating.

These deliberations inevitably force us to conclude that Śiva and Śakti are not two substances existing separately, but one only. The inactive consciousness is Śiva and his dynamic aspect is Śakti. The world is just his self-transformation. He can show up the world at times and at times withdraw it. Śiva and Śakti are ontologically identical and only logically different.

Some post-Basava Sanskrit authors have termed the relation between Śiva, Śakti and the individual soul (Aṅga) Śivādvaita. For example, the *Siddhānata-śikhāmaṇī* describes Agastya as well-versed in Śivādvaita. The author of *Śivādvaita-mañjarī* uses the word 'Śakti-viśiṣṭādvaita' and 'Śivādvaita' as synonyms. However, the word Śivādvaita as used by Nīlakaṇṭha Śivācārya in his commentary on the *Brahma-sūtras* called *Śrīkaṇṭha-bhāṣya* carries the same meaning as Viśiṣṭādvaita. In the system of Rāmānuja's Viśiṣṭādvaita the world of material objects and the souls are only parts of Brahman and not the

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same as Brahman. The individual souls even during their purest state of Mōkṣa merge in Brahman but do not become Brahman. Nīlakaṇṭha holds the same position so far as the relation between Brahman and the liberated individual soul is concerned. Rēṇuka or Rēvaṇa-siddha (of *Siddhānata-śikhāmaṇī*) after teaching Vīraśaivism goes back to Kailāsa from where he came and remains different from Śiva (Liṅga). Maggeya Māyidēva in his *Śivānubhava-sūtram* identifies Mōkṣa with life in Kailāsa.

But Liṅgāyatism holds that the individual souls (Aṅgas) come out of Brahman like sparks from a great fire and when liberated become again Liṅga. There is absolute identity between the two. Therefore, calling the Liṅgāyat metaphysics Śakti-viśiṣṭādvaita or Śivādvaita is wrong.

Many Vacanakāras use the words 'Advaita', 'Advaya', 'Śivaikya' or 'Liṅgaikya' to describe the relation between the liberated individual soul and Liṅga. But this should not tempt us to identify Liṅgāyatism with Advaita of Śaṅkara. Because the relation conceived between the world and Liṅga is different from the Advaitic conception. When the idea of creation arises in Liṅga its Śakti which was unmanifest becomes active and transforms into the world. Allama says that just as shoots, flowers and fruits appear seasonally in a tree so the world appears according to the wish of God[46]. At the right time God destroys it. This implies that the world created and destroyed consciously and purposively by Linga cannot be illusory but real. It may be transient, but not illusory.

TheVachanakaras, however, conceive that the evolution of Śakti is not outside Linga, but is inside it and is wholly pervaded by it[47]. This can be compared to a pot full of water which is immersed in a sea. Worldly men perceive the world as being outside them and their own mental states as being inside them, whereas Liṅgaikya, like Liṅga, perceives the world as being within himself.

According to theVacanakāras, the Yōgi (mystic) who identifies himself with Liṅga forgets his inidividuality. While the Yōgi of Advaita who identifies himself with Brahman sees

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Brahman alone and does not see the world, the Liṅgāyat Yōgi sees both the world and Liṅga in it. He feels that he is not different from Liṅga and the world. For him Liṅga, the world and himself are distinctionless one.

One may object, "Does the Liṅgāyat Yōgi who identifies himself with Liṅga become another creator, destroyer, etc?" It may be replied that Liṅgāyat Yōgi does not become another creator, etc. That is unthinkable. He just thinks that he is not a separate individual but Liṅga and that the world is in himself. Let us see someVachanas of Allama:

1. **Fourteen worlds are in Sharana's belly . . .**[48]
2. **This world and the next are where he is . . .**[49]
3. **Having forgotten his ego, having shunned the corporeal qualities**
   As he thought this world and the other are himself,
   The feeling 'I am he' settled . . .[50]

This conception is not special to Allama Prabhu. Other Vachanakaras also believe that the Anubhāvi (Śaraṇa or Liṅgāyat Yōgi) perceives both God and the world in himself. When Cennabasavanṇṇa says, for example, "When the great seer who has realized that he himself is the world and the entire world is himself . . . [51]" he means that he, God and the world are one. Ādayya[52] supports this. Bāla Saṅgayya says that Śaraṇa is one in whom numberless Brahmas, numberless Viṣṇus, numberless Indras, etc. are created and he is the Absolute beyond our perception[53].

We should also recall that both Allama[54] and Cennabasavaṇṇa[55] say that the world existed unmanifest before creation in Śaraṇa. Similarly, Tōṇṭada Siddhaliṅga Śivayōgi says that ". . . from that Impartite Liṅga self-awareness arose and this assumed the form of Śaraṇa . . ."[56], from whom the evolution of the world proceeded.

Here one may object that it is not a fact, but only an illusion, that the whole world exists in a Śaraṇa. The Śaraṇa may give two replies. 1. If the existence of the world in a Śaraṇa

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is an illusion, then existence of God in him is also an illusion. But all Śaraṇas opine that God exists in all beings and that only the Śaraṇas have realized Him. If 'becoming Liṅga' means attaining to the state of a Śaraṇa who conceives himself as non-different from Liṅga, it is not a strange feeling but a feeling common to many theistic mystics. 2. Many Upaniṣadic seers and Indian philosophers hold that in the mystic state the soul has temporarily disconnected itself from external objects, senses, mind, intellect and ego. The soul which is aloof (kēvala) they call Brahman, consciousness, Vidyā, Jñāna, etc. That knowledge is knowledge real and certain while empirical knowledge is doubtful or ignorance (Avidyā). There is, therefore, no scope for regarding mystic experience an illusion. Since the Śaraṇa experiences Liṅga in his mystic intuition the feeling that he is Liṅga or is pervaded by Liṅga is an indubitable truth. As he has experienced God several times in his mystic experience he perveives God in the world in the waking state also. Therefore, if the statement that individual soul and the universal soul are identical is not false then the statements that world and Liṅga are one and that Liṅga and individual soul and world are one are not false either.

If one insists on branding the Liṅgāyat metaphysics, one should brand it panentheism or Liṅgādvaita.

CLASSIFICATION OF ŚAKTI

While Paraśiva as empty consciousness-space (Cid-bayalu, Cidākāśa or Śūnya) cannot be described, he as qualified by Śakti can be described, as creator, maintainer, etc. The Śakti, by virtue of which Paraśiva becomes both material and efficient cause of all cosmic changes, is in its primordial state called Cittu or Nenahu. It is both self-consciousness and the idea or decision to evolve. Also called Cit-śakti, it is the original form of Śakti which later evolves into other forms of Śakti, such as Icchā- śakti, Jñāna-śakti, Kriyā-śakti, etc[57]. Mari Tōṇṭadārya, a commentator on *Siddhānta-śikhāmaṇī* argues that if Paraśiva were without Vimarśa-śakti (Nenahu), "he would not be conscious of himself, and if he were not conscious of himself,

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he would not be an efficient cause of any effect"[58]. Without Vimarśa-śakti he would still be called Prakāśa (luminosity), but such a Prakāśa would not be any different from the luminosity of an insentient mirror or diamond. What Mari Tōṇṭadārya says has empirical instances. Unless I become aware of myself I cannot know and decide what I should do, etc. While self-awareness is called Cit-śakti, the decision to act is called Icchā-śakti, knowledge of what I should do is called Jñāna-śakti and the actual doing is called Kriyā-śakti.

It can be further said that Nenahu, self-consciousness, is related, on the one hand, to Paraśiva, who is supreme consciousness, and, on the other, to the world in its unmanifest form. This is comparable to the egg of a peahen which contains the multihued plumes, beak, wings, etc. of the not yet born peacock[59].

It is better to say that Icchā and other forms of Śakti are only modes of Nenahu which does not perish on its evolution into other forms, unlike the seed which dies out when it becomes a plant. In fact, it accompanies them throughout their evolution[60].

When Paraśiva becomes conscious of himself he comes to be called Niṣkala-liṅga (Impartite Liṅga)[61]. Śakti which was unmanifest in the Śūnya state, now becomes manifest and Paraśiva is now ready to manifest his creative and other capacities. Because of vibration of his Śakti, he divides himself into two, Aṅga-sthala and Liṅga-sthala. The former means the individual soul whose state is that of a worshipper (pūjaka) and the latter means God, Aṅga's object of worship. Simultaneously the Śakti associated with Niṣkala-liṅga is divided into two, namely, Kalā-śakti (Pravṛtti-śakti or Adhō-māyā) and Bhakti-śakti (Nivṛtti-śakti or Ūrdhva-māyā). Sometimes the former is called simply Śakti and the latter Bhakti. But it must be remembered that just as Aṅga and Liṅga are essentially one, so Śakti and Bhakti are essentially one. That Śakti which is associated with Liṅga is Kalā-śakti and that Śakti which is associated with the individual soul is Bhakti-śakti. Since

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Aṅga is also called Bhakta, the Śakti associated with him is called Bhakti-śakti.

This may lead to a misunderstanding that there are really two distinct kinds of Śakti, called Kalā-śakti and Bhakti-śakti. Aṅga means, not the individual soul with all its limiting adjuncts, but the pure soul which is identical to Liṅga. This further means that the pure Aṅga is associated with Bhaktis (Bhakti-śaktis) and the impure soul with Kalā-śaktis. Similarly, the Śakti associated with God (Liṅga) is called Kalā-śakti; but this Śakti which God uses as his material cause for the creation of the universe and bodies, senses, etc. of the living beings, does not constitute the limiting adjuncts of the souls. In fact, God's Śakti is neither conducive nor obstructive to spiritual progress of man. With Śakti transformed as limbs, mind, intellect, etc. the individual soul may take up spiritual programme and realise its original nature as Liṅga, or indulging in irreligious and immoral activities may forget Liṅga. That is, to convert its Śakti into Kalā-śakti or Bhakti-śakti is left to the choice of the Aṅga. It is true that its Śaktis are defiled by birth in accordance with its past deeds; but that does not prevent it from stopping further defiling or purifying the Śaktis. Once man realises by the gracious teaching of Guru that he was originally one with Liṅga and that he can escape the influence of Kalā-śakti, he begins to convert the Kalā-śaktis into Bhakti-śaktis and exploit spiritual consequences and ultimately unite with Liṅga[62].

Sometimes it is said that from the original Śakti, Cit-śakti, Parā-śakti evolves, from Parā-śakti Ādi-śakti, from this Icchā-śakti, from this Jñāna-śakti and from this Kriyā-śakti. Each Śakti, being inherently unconscious, is accompanied by a form of Liṅga, Upamātīta, Sadāśiva, Īśvara, Rudra, Viṣṇu, Brahma, respectively. Sometimes these names of Liṅga are substituted for Nirmukta-sādākhya, Śiva-sādākhya, Amūrta-sādākhya, Mūrti-sādākhya, Kartṛ-sādākhya and Karma-sādākhya[63]. Some Vacanakāras seem to think, perhaps rightly, that the six forms of Liṅga are associated with Aṅga-sthalas (i.e., the six forms of Liṅga situated in the different part of Aṅga's body), while the

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Sādākhyas are associated with the Kalā-śaktis which are employed in the creation of the universe, including the bodies, senses, etc. of the living beings.

ŚAKTIS AS MATERIAL CAUSE

Cit-śakti is the original source of all Śaktis, on the one hand, and of all the individual souls, on the other. Rather, the Cit-śakti distinguishes itself into individual selves at the behest of Mahāliṅga (or Mahā-sādākhya). But it should not be forgotten that the individual souls (Aṅgas) and Liṅga (Liṅga-sthala), Cittu and Mahāliṅga are all one, being different only functionally.

The Parā-śakti associated with Sadāśiva or Śiva-sādākhya, is, like Cit-śakti, a subtle entity, pure and formless. It is a formless raw material to be used in the creation of Ākāśa (space). The Ākāśa produced by Para-śakti may get some form, like that in a pot or jar, or remain formless like outer space. But unless things like pot, etc. in which it is to be contained are produced it remains formless.

The reason why it is called Parā-śakti and why Parā-śakti should produce space is that if there is to be a physical world, either in its subtle or in gross form, there must necessarily be space in which to exist. That is why creation of space is prior to other entities. If this is so, then the Śakti which produces the space must transcend all other Śaktis which create the physical elements. Hence the name Parā-śakti (Transcendent Force) is appropriate.

The Amūrti-sādākhya, also called Īśvara, is associated with Ādi-śakti, which is an active and productive constituent. It is the principle of Vāyu (air), which is grosser than Ākāśa. The Vāyu element is not yet the one which takes the form of pot when present in pot, or of jug, when present in jug, or the one which shakes the branches of the trees, plants, etc. because it can take the forms of a pot, etc. only after these gross things are produced. It is, for the time being, only raw material which is not yet used in creation, and whose form and functions, therefore, have not come into light. Īśvara is the efficient cause.

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The Icchā-śakti associated with Mūrti-sādākhya, also called Rudra, like other Śaktis, is an entity which is pure and formless. Rudra creates out of this Śakti the mass of fire elements which is to be used as one of the constituent elements in the creation of body, senses, and the world of objects. It is pure because it is not yet mixed with other elements and formless because it has no shape of a flame, for example. It has the capacity to burn, but does not burn now, because there is nothing to be burnt. It can be seen in its different forms and colours and it can burn things only when the creation is complete and when other conditions are fulfilled.

Kartṛ-sādākhya, also called Viṣṇu or Nārāyaṇa, is the efficient cause and Jñāna-śakti is the material cause. Out of this Śakti Viṣṇu creates the mass of water elements which is to be used as one of the constituent elements in the creation of the phenomenal world. The water element is not the finished product we use, but only a pure and formless mass of particles of water. Though it has all qualities of liquid, it is not of any particular form of liquid we know.

Kriyā-śakti is associated with Karma-sādākhya, also called Brahma, just as a material cause is associated with an efficient cause. Brahma out of Kriyā-śakti creates the grossest of all constituents, the mass of earth elements, which, like other masses, is pure and formless. This is not a finished product but one that is to be used to produce finished products.

Kriyā-śakti is not merely a material cause out of which the earth elements are produced, but something which lends Brahma the power to create the world of living and non-living beings by combining the different forms of Śakti[64].

The body, senses, mind, etc., according to the Vacanakāras, are products of Śakti. Sometimes the Vacanakāras substitute the names of the five elements for those of the five Śaktis, such as Kriyā-śakti, etc[65]. These five elements of which the gross body and physical objects are made have their own attributes and functions. The earth, water, fire, air and space principles are said to have, respectively, hardness or bearing

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weight; cohesion or bringing together scattered particles; burning things, destroying their earlier qualities and also creating new qualities; moving things and making room for things[66].

Senses (*jñānēndriyas*), like the five elements and the objects of senses (*tanmātras*), are Śaktis. We have to note here that by senses the Vacanakāras mean, not what we normally call sense organs, like eyes, ears, tongue, etc. made of flesh and blood, but the capacity to receive the sensations (tanmātras) of sound, smell, taste, form and touch. Though we receive sounds through the ear, ear itself cannot perceive sound. Many a time we may not be able to grasp sounds, though we have ears. For the same reason the ability to talk is known as *vāgindriya*, the ability to move *pādēndriya* is known as legs and so on. In this sense, generative organ, anus and hands are also Śaktis. As our ability to smell is expressed through the nose so the ability to talk is expressed through the speech organ. But throat itself is not *vāgindriya*. In common parlance it may be said that eyes have the capacity to see (seeing is the quality of eyes), throat has the ability to speak (speaking is a quality of the throat) and so on and this may solve some linguistic problems. But we should not sacrifice the meaning of words for the sake of solving linguistic confusion and uncertainities. In his '*Karaṇa-hasige*' Cennabasavaṇṇa says,

> **The five inner organs such as manas, etc. are forms of Parā-śakti, the five gross elements such as the earth element, etc. are forms of Icchā-śakti, the five senses, such as ears, etc. are forms of Jñāna-śakti, the five motor organs such as speech organ, etc. are the forms of Kriyā-śakti. Therefore, these principles are the forms of the five Śaktis. Adding the individual soul, they make twenty-five principles . . .**[67]

Four inner organs also are Śaktis. When we simultaneously receive multitude of sensations like sound, forms, smell, etc, only that sensation (example, form) on which the mind (*manas*) concentrates is inducted into our intellect which decides that it

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is our friend. It is the ego which creates the feeling of 'I'. It is the citta which decides as to what should be or should not be done. It is citta again which is subjected to such emotions as anger, sorrow and pleasure[68].

Cennabasavaṇṇa says further that all the inner organs are the forms of Parā-śakti, all gross elements are forms of Ichā-śakti etc. Different Vacanakāras or the same Vacanakāras on different occasions may speak in different manner on this subject. But one thing appears certain, that all these Vacanakāras believe senses, inner organs, motor organs, etc. are the results of different forms of Śakti mixed in different proportions. Two Vacanas among many substantiate our stand.

1. **From the soul was born space, from space air;**
   From air was born fire and from fire water;
   From water was born earth . . .
   These five gross material elements thus born,
   Became twenty-five principles and human body.
   The details are as follows.
   From space the four internal organs were born;
   From air the five vital airs were born;
   From fire were born the five sense organs . . .
   (and so on);
   When space mixed with space, Jñāna was born;
   When space mixed with air, mind was born;
   When mixed with fire ego was born (and so on)[69]

2. **When the soul combined with space, jñāna was born;**
   When the soul combined with air, mind was born;
   When the soul combined with fire, ego was born;
   (and so on)[70]

The Vacanas quoted above state in clear terms that Brahma who is a form of Paraśiva produces the different parts of our body by a permutation and combination of different forms of Śakti in varying proportions.

Some Vacanakāras, like Tōṇṭada Siddhaliṅga Śivayōgi, speak of Kalās in addition to Śaktis and also as identical to

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Śakti. In his *Ṣaṭ-sthala-jñānasārāmṛta*[71] he says that, for example, Śāntyatīta-kalā is in the centre of Para-śakti and in v. 39 that 'Śyāntyatīta-kalā' is another name of 'Para-śakti' (similarly, he uses other synonyms for the remaining forms of Śakti). From the Vacanas which speak so it can be surmised that they are pure forms of Śakti which when associated with man become defiled because of his forgetfulness (marevu). The Vacanakāras assert that Kalās (pure forms of Śakti) constitute a set of conditions which are conducive to the spiritual progress that culminate in the Aṅga's union with Liṅga. The aspirant's self cannot unite with Liṅga unless it attains freedom from the worldly tendencies of the five senses, four internal instruments, five organs of actions, etc. With the help of Nivṛtti-kalā the aspirant causes such a restraint on the five motor organs, namely, hands, legs, vocal organ, generative organ and anus, that they not only cease to be engaged in the worldly activities but also constitute a very important step towards the goal. Thus he determines to use his vocal organ only to utter the name of Śiva, to use his hands only to perform religious and morally good acts prescribed by Liṅgāyatism, to use his legs to walk along the path of directed by Guru, to use his anus to get rid of the three impurities (mala-traya), namely, ignorance (māyīya-mala), limitedness (āṇava-mala) and results of evil acts (kārmika-mala), and not to use his generative organ to obtain immoral sexual pleasure, but instead, to derive spiritual pleasure in the company of Śaraṇas.

The aspirant who wants to make further progress spiritually is guided by the Pratiṣṭhā-kalā by means of which he can keep his five subtle elements (tanmātras) under check and harness them for spiritual progress. Thus for him sound means words of teacher, touch means touch of Iṣṭa-liṅga, sight means sight of emblems of Śiva-faith, taste means taste of Prasāda and smell is smell of purity of Śiva. Such a man as determines the restriction of the tanmātras (sense-objects) is said to experience the brilliance of Guru-liṅga called Vāmadēva or Kartṛ-sādākhya.

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The devotee who wishes to progress further and unite his soul with the Śiva-liṅga, whose brilliance is Aghōra (also called Mūrti-sādākhya) must take the help of Vidyā-kalā and determine not to wear any glamorous thing but only Rudrākṣa, Vibhūti and Iṣṭa-liṅga, not to see the bewitching worldly forms, but to have in his eyes the sight of Iṣṭa-liṅga, not to touch other foods than the Prasāda, not to enjoy other smells than purity of Śiva and not to hear other talks than stories about the Śiva-devotees.

Similarly, the aspirant who wishes to attain higher spiritual stage where he is expected to unite his soul with Jaṅ gama-liṅga, or to experience its brilliance (prakāśa) called Tatpuruṣa or Amūrti-sādākhya must take the help of Śānti-kalā so that he can control the five airs (vāyus) that have played adverse roles all these ages. When he controls the five Vāyus, namely, Prāṇa, Apāna, Samāna, Udāna and Vyāna he is said to acquire partially the five attributes of Śiva, Sat, Cit, Ānanda, Nitya and Paripūrṇa.

In the fifth stage the aspirant is required to take the help of Śāntyatīta-kala in order to restrict the activities of the mind (manas), intellect (buddhi), will (citta) and ego (ahaṃ). Thus his mind is trained to meditate on Śiva, his intellect to adopt honesty, his will to decide to perform Dāsōha and his ego to get rid of egoism[72].

FIVE FUNCTIONS OF PARAŚIVA

Once the featureless Śiva becomes qualified by Śakti the latter agitates and as a result, he divides into Aṅga-sthala (souls) and Liṅga-sthala (personal God). Similarly, Śakti which was inherent in him in a dormant state now is divided into Kalā-śaktis and Bhakti-śaktis. Śiva evolves into six forms of Liṅga each of which is associated with a form of Śakti, by virtue of which he becomes able to perform five cosmic functions, namely, creation (sṛṣṭi), maintenance (sthiti), retraction (saṃhāra), veiling the souls (tirōdhāna) and gracing the souls (anugraha)[73].

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Liṅgāyats' conception of Śiva is neither like Śaiva Siddhāntins' nor like the Christians'. The Christians conceive that God just wills to create and the world is created out of nothing in six days. The Śaiva Siddhāntins conceive that Śiva creates the world out of Māyā or Prakṛti, just as a potter creates pots, jugs etc. out of the already available clay. Liṅgāyats conceive that Śakti which was in dormant form evolves into the world at the behest of Paraśiva, in a certain order. Paraśiva who creates the world is called Brahma and his Śakti which evolves into the world is called Kriyā-śakti.

After the creation of the world, Paraśiva unlike the Deist God, does not leave the world to itself. He continues to be concerned with it. He maintains its continuation. For his function he is called Viṣṇu and his Śakti is Jñāna-śakti. Paraśiva destroys the universe when he is pleased. Liṅga who performs this is called Rudra and his Śakti Icchā-śakti.

Paraśiva not merely evolves out of himself all the material and spiritual entities, but also sees to it that each individual self is bound to a set of body, senses, cognitive instruments, etc. and to a particular environment and heredity, in accordance with its merits and demerits of deeds done in the previous life or lives. This act of Paraśiva is technically called Tirōdhāna (veiling of the souls). He is also believed to perform another act, called Anugraha (bestowing grace) on the individual souls in accordance with their spiritual achievements. The highest form of grace is causing the soul to unite with Liṅga. Paraśiva who does these last two functions is called, respectively, Īśvara and Sadāśiva, and his Śaktis Ādi-śakti and Para-śakti. Sometimes these names of Liṅga are interchanged with five Sādākhyas (faces), respectively, Karma-sādākhya, Kartṛ-sādākhya, Mūrti-sādākhya, Amūrti-sādākhya and Śiva-sādākhya.

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CHAPTER FIVE:

COSMOLOGY

The Vacanakāras of the 12th century Karnataka evinced keen interest in cosmological issues, not as pure philosophical questions, but as questions related to man's life. Their cosmological deliberations are a search for a knowledge which redeems man from the thraldom of *saṃsāra*. It is needless to say that their cosmology is speculative or philosophical, not scientific and teleological, not mechanistic.

Liṅgāyat cosmological issues are related to 1. the substantial or material cause of the world, 2. efficient cause of the world, 3. the order in which the world evolved, 4. the purpose for the birth, continuation and destruction of the world and 5. the nature of the sensible world.

The Liṅgāyat view is fundamentally different from spiritual monism of Śaṅkarācārya, according to which, the *only reality is featureless Brahman* while the world and the plurality of souls are mere appearances to the Avidyā-infected minds. Thus since the world, in the final analysis, is illusory, to search for the cause of its creation is redundant.

1. Material cause of the world.

This is perhaps one of the oldest philosophical questions asked by man and is familiar to people of all countries. In Europe the first people to raise such philosophical issues were the ancient Greeks. In fact, their philosophy begins precisely with this question. According to Thales, the Father of Greek Philosophy, the origin and cause of the world is water; to Anaximenes, air; to Heraclitus fire; to Empedocles, the four kinds of material elements, earth, water, fire and air; Democritus

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and his followers, like the modern scientists, believed that material elements, which have no qualitative difference, are the ultimate units of the world.

Indian philosophers have given various answers to this question. Cārvākas have tried to explain the physical, biological and mental phenomena by the four elements, earth, water, air and fire; Hīnayāna Buddhists by 72 *dharmas* which are grouped under *rūpa dharmas*, *citta-caitta dharmas* and *saṃskāra dharmas*; the Jains by Jīva (consciousness) and Ajīva (*pudgala* or physical things, *dharma*, *adharma*, *kāla* and *ākāśa*), the Sāṅkhyas and the Vaiśeṣikas by the spiritual substances (souls) and inanimate elements (Prakṛti or atoms). According to the Vacanakāras, for the emergence of the world of all animate and inanimate beings the Śakti is the material cause. Here, we need to clarify two things.

We have already dealt with the concept of Śakti as the material cause of the universe. We only remind the readers of two points. 1. Śakti is not merely a quality of Śakti-wielder, but a causal substance. 2. Śakti is not the spouse of Paraśiva or Mother Goddess or any person.

2. Efficient cause of the world

Some people argue that an enquiry into the efficient cause of the world may dampen the spirit of scientific enquiry into the fundamental empirical truth or law that governs the world and instigate us to indulge in unnecessary speculation of hypothesis that lies beyond human understanding. Their justification is that if it is possible to explain all things and events in the physical world and human pain and pleasure by natural causes, there is no need to search for supernatural causes, like God, Karma, etc.

Before dismissing this argument, let us distinguish between questions pertaining to particular events, like, for example, "What is the reason for the outbreak of Covid-19?" and questions about general events, like, "What is the cause of the universe?" The cause of Ccovid-19 outbreak may be empirically explained as a result of a purposeless, accidental

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event in a laboratory or as a result of machination of a rogue nation. But our quest for the cause of the universe is unlike this question. Because, after knowing that for a particular event X is the cause, for X Y is the cause, and so on, we still ask, "What is the first cause of the universe?" It should be noted that such question is not asked by one who is tired of asking further questions, but by one who has realised that all such questions presuppose that the series must have a beginning. If it has a beginning, then the Vacanakāras' question, "Who is the first cause or the efficient cause of this universe?" is not meaningless. If the materialist position that the self-existent and unconscious matter transforms itself into all physical, chemical, biological, mental and spiritual phenomena without the impetus of an external non-material cause were philosophically satisfactory the question of the efficient cause would not arise. In asking the second question Liṅgāyats believe in two presuppositions.

a. There was a time when there were no planets, stars, souls, plants or animals. This science accepts. They came into existence only after their creation. There are two beliefs concerning this theory. According to one belief, the universe and the living beings must have been created out of the already existing ingredients. All the Indian philosophical systems which believe in creation at a specific time subscribe to this belief. For example, according to the Mādhvas, Brahman made use of Prakṛti (matter), Puruṣas (souls), Kāla (time) and Karma which were formless ingredients to create the universe. The other belief (e.g. the Christian belief) is that as there was nothing in the beginning except God, God must have created the world out of nothing. The Christians, in order to overcome the possible objection that it is logically impossible to create something out of nothing, argue that God created the world out of his Idea (Icchā). Implicit in this argument is the fact that God did not depend on any external thing to execute his plan. Liṅgāyats believe that in the beginning there was only God in the form of Śūnya or Bayalu and nothing existed in it and that the birth of the world was the result of the manifestation of Śakti which was there in Śiva in the form of *nenahu* or Idea or Cit-śakti.

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b. The second theory says that the universe is a system for the creation of which insentient matter alone could not be the cause. For an appreciation of this theory of the Liṅgāyats we have to contrast it with the atheist creation theories.

The Cārvākas believe that the four elements earth, water, air and fire, have the natural capacity to transform themselves as stone, soil, plant, tree, man and animal, etc. without the help of any non-physical agency or creator. Sāṅkhyas who also reject the theory of creator are not very different from Cārvākas. While for the Cārvākas matter is the root cause of both conscious and non-conscious beings, for the Sāṅkhyas Puruṣa (soul) is not a product of Prakṛti. Moreover, the Sāṅkhyas believe that Prakṛti consists of three kinds of *guṇas* (reals), namely, *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*, which at the end of *pralaya* (dissolution) begin to dominate one another as a result of which, depending upon the totality of Karma of the individual souls, creation takes place. This opinion is supported by Kaṇāda's Vaiśeṣika philosophy. But the opinion of Cārvāka, Sāṅkhya and Kaṇāda is opposed by the Naiyāyikas, according to whom, the elements, the *satva*, *rajas* and *tamas*, or the atoms, do not have the power to integrate and disintegrate on their own. Nor can the Sāṅkyas' Puruṣa who is inactive, influence the Guṇas. Moreover, the claim of the Vaiśeṣikas and the Sāṅkhyas that unseen force (*adṛṣṭa*) or Karma chooses the right time of creation and dissolution and that it determines happiness and unhappiness of man and animals in appropriate proportion and at appropriate time cannot be accepted. Therefore, in order to search for the cause of integration and disintegration of the four elements or of the three kinds of reals or atoms we have to go outside their range, because their cause has to be qualitatively different from them. In other words, it must be consciousness (Cētana), God, who has the capability of controlling and directing all the sentient and insentient beings.

The Liṅgāyats hold that the raw materials (Śakti) have the productive capacity, but it remains dormant till it receives impetus. If Śakti is sometimes active and sometimes inactive it

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is reasonable – in fact, necessary – to search for the reason of its cyclical activity or inactivity outside the realm of the Śaktis, for the cause which controls the temporary activity and inactivity of Śakti cannot belong to the class of Śaktis. The cause should be a conscious being.

The cause, according to the Vacanakāras, is Paraśiva. As they firmly believed that they are a part or the body of Paraśiva they made no efforts to establish his being. Perhaps they had realized that the logical ways were too inadequate and insipid to prove his existence. It is precisely for this reason that we do not find in the entire gamut of Vacana literature any serious and devoted effort to establish the existence of God. There are some Vacanas, of course, which speak of very vague efforts at it. Their number is insignificant; their logical value is equally inconsequential.

We can examine a few of them:

Innumerable aeons in the past have cyclically come and gone;
It is because of your wish that they have come;
Not of their own accord . . .
They are all under your control.
They appear, if you make them appear,
And disappear, if you say 'no'. . .[1]

In this Vacana Siddharāma upholds the view that Paraśiva is responsible for all that happens in the universe and that he alone has the absolute freedom and power to do whatever he does. In another Vacana he asks,

Icchā, Jñāna and Kriyā-śaktis are under your control;
What is it that wishes - Śiva or Śakti?
Answer, if you know! . . .[2]

and expects the readers to infer that the different Śaktis do not have a will or capacity of impacting other Śaktis and such a capacity lies with Paraśiva, the Śakti-wielder. For their existence, impetus and activities they depend on Paraśiva.

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We can also see a similar effort in Akka Mahādēvi's Vacana[3]. But Basavaṇṇa treads a different path to establish the existence of Paraśiva.

O Lord, I am born where you choose,
I die where you choose.
O Lord, can I choose them?
O Lord, I live where you choose.
Can I choose it . . .?[4]

Here Basavaṇṇa is arguing that though time, space and nature of our life and death are determined by our Karmas, the responsibility to determine them rests ultimately with Paraśiva.

These attempts may be philosophically defective or wanting. But they speak in clear terms that the Śaktis, the material cause of the world, become active or inactive only at the behest of a conscious being that controls and directs them.

Those who wrongly believe that Śakti is external to and independent of Śiva may object that the Vacanakāras do not spell out who or what the cause of Śakti is. To this we may reply that Śakti being an extractable quality of Śiva has no independent existence. Therefore, the question of the cause of Śakti does not arise. In fact, the question about the cause of Śakti is ridiculous like "What is the cause of Śiva?" Śiva, unlike a potter, who creates pots, jugs, etc. out of clay which is external to him, transforms his Śakti into the world. His self-transformation is analogically described as follows.

When from the same clay are made many pots,
When from the same gold are made many ornaments,
When from the same water are made many hailstones,
How can the world evolved from
The same Brahman be different from him? . . .[5]

Being one without a second, he became the world.
A king can assume the form of a servant
And again become the king.

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Our Lord Uriliṅga Peddi Priya Viśvēśvara
Can choose to become the world and can as well
Choose not to become the world[6].

In short, Śiva is both material and efficient cause of the universe.

Some Vacanakāras have compared this self-transformative process to that of sea becoming tide, wave, foam, etc. and to the spider weaving a net out of the thread produced by itself.

3. The Order in Which the Universe Evolves

While it is easy to define the Vacanakāras' conception of creation as Śiva's self-transformation, it is not easy to describe their conception of the order in which his self-transformation takes place. We face two kinds of complications, one, regarding the number of principles involved in creation and the other, regarding the names of the principles. Regarding the number of principles there are three theories. Tōṇṭada Siddhaliṅga Śivayōgi who has written more creation Vacanas than any other Vacanakāras offers three theories, without showing any preference.

In the beginning there was only God in the form of Śūnya or Bayalu (space) without anything in it. This is a state in which there was no duality; Śūnya, the original status, was featureless, incomparable, partless and was uncovered[7]; in it there was no distinction between beginning, middle or end[8]; there was neither inside nor outside, no direction[9] (left, right, above, below, front back, etc.). Śūnya could not be called transcendent Śiva (Paraśiva) as there was nothing he transcended; there were no Brahma, Vīṣṇu, Rudra, Īśvara, and Sadāśiva who do creation, maintenance, destruction, veiling the souls according to their Karmas and gracing the virtuous[10]; there were no five material elements[11]; Śūnya was neither cause and effect, because only after creation he can be called cause as distinguished from creation, the effect[12]. God was not aware of anything as there was nothing to be aware of; nor was he aware of himself[13]. This state of God is designated by Tōṇṭada Siddhaliṅga Śivayōgi as Sarva-śūnya-nirālamba-sthala; Śūnya-

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sthala, etc. This is comparable to the Upaniṣadic concept of asat. In fact, asat means Śūnya (void).

When God becomes aware of himself he decides to create. His decision is variously called Cittu, Jñāna-cittu, Cit-śakti, Nenahu, etc. Jñāna-cittu which was unmanifest in the Śūnya state now becomes a quality of Śiva and evolves under his direction. Sometimes Tōṇṭada Siddhaliṅga Śivayōgi makes a distinction between Jñāna-cittu and Cit-śakti. According to him[14], Jñāna-cittu evolves into Cit-śakti which is associated with Mahāliṅga. From Cit-śakti evolves Parā-śakti which is associated with Prasāda-liṅga; from Parā-śakti Ādi-śakti evolves which is associated with Jaṅgama-liṅga; from Ādi-śakti evolves Icchā-śakti which is associated with Śiva-liṅga; from Icchā-śakti evolves Jñāna-śakti which is associated with Guru-liṅga; from Jñāna-śakti evolves Kriyā-śakti which is associated with Ācāra-liṅga. These six pairs if Śaktis and Liṅgas are present in every individual soul (elsewhere Siddhaliṅga substitutes the names of Sādākhyas for the names of six Liṅgas).

In another Vacana he says that Śiva who in this state is called Niḥkala-tattva[15] divides himself into Aṅga-sthala and Liṅga-sthala; his Śakti also divides into Bhakti which resides with Aṅga and Śakti which resides with Liṅga. These two forms of Śakti are sometimes called, respectively, Nivṛtti-śakti or Ūrdhva-māya and Pravṛtti-śakti or Adhō-māya. Liṅga divides itself into six, called Mahāliṅga, Prasāda-liṅga, etc. Similarly, Bhakti is divided into six forms, namely, Samarasa, Ānanda, Anubhāva, Avadhāna, Naiṣṭhikā and Viśvāsa. There is no essential distinction between Aṅga and Liṅga.

In another Vacana[16] the same author says that in the centre of Cit-śakti is Śāntyatītōttara-kalā; in its centre is Mahāliṅga; in Mahāliṅga's centre is Nirmukti-sādākhya; in its centre is Paśupati and in Paśupati's centre is an Aikya called Śiva; in his centre is Ātman. In this way the set of Śiva-sādakhya is created. Similarly, the other five sets of Kartṛ-sādākhya, Karma-sādākhya, etc. along with seven ingredients (Liṅga, Śakti, Kalā, Bhaktas, material elements, etc.) are created

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(6x7=42). Śakti's evolution into five senses, five motor organs, five sensations, four internal organs and soul is not yet taken into consideration. Siddhaliṅga also says[17] that Cittu evolves into three constituents of Ōṃ, namely, a, u, m, which became Nāda, Bindu and Kalā. He elsewhere says that from the Praṇava six consonants emerge, viz, ōm, na, ma, śi, vā, ya and from them senses, etc. evolve.

The order in which these evolve is as follows. From Liṅga-sthala evolve six Sādākhyas (faces), namely, Nirmukta-sādākhya, Śiva-sādākhya, Amūrti-sādākhya, Mūrti-sādākhya, Kartṛ-sādākhya and Karma-sādākhya along with their respective Śaktis, namely, Cit-śakti, Parā-śakti, Ādi-śakti, Icchā-śakti, Jñāna-śakti and Kriyā-śakti. The Sādākhyas are also called, respectively, Upamātīta, Sadāśiva, Īśvara, Rudra, Viṣṇu and Brahma. Similarly, the six Śaktis are also called respectively, namely, Śāntyatītōttara, Śāntyatīta, Śānti, Pratiṣṭhā, Vidyā and Nivṛtti. From Aṅga-sthala emerge six Aṅgas, namely, Aikya, Śaraṇa, Prāṇa-liṅgi, Prasādi, Māhēśvara and Bhakta, along with their respective Śaktis, called Bhaktis, namely, Samarasa, Ānanda, Anubhāva, Avadhāna, Niṣṭhā and Vīśvāsa (Śraddhā). The six-fold Śakti became the body of six-fold Liṅga-sthala and the six-fold Bhakti became body of the six-fold Aṅga-sthala. The six Sādākhyas and their respective Śaktis are together the causes of different parts of the human body, like senses, motor organs, etc. The Bhaktis are spiritual forces which help the devotee's spiritual endeavour. It is important to note that Liṅga settled in the body of the devotee in his six Cakras and is called Mahā-liṅga, Prasāda liṅga, Jaṅgama-liṅga, Śiva-liṅga, Guru-liṅga and Ācāra-liṅga. The Cakras which house these forms of Liṅga are, respectively, Ājñā-cakra, Viśuddhi-cakra, Anāhata-cakra, Maṇipūraka-cakra, Svādhiṣṭhāna-cakra and Ādhāra-cakra. It is believed that the Bhaktis help the devotee to realise the Liṅgas gradually. Tōṇṭada Siddhaliṅga Śivayōgi insists that "Aṅga is Śaraṇa and Liṅga is Śiva; to the Śaraṇa Liṅga is always his breath and to Liṅga Śaraṇa is always his body. The relation between the two is one of identity, like that between seed and tree"[18].

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However, there are Vacanas which offer a creation theory which more or less agrees with the creation theory of Kashmir Śaivism and Śaiva Siddhānta. According to this theory, thirty-six principles (tattvas) are involved in creation of the universe, which are grouped under three heads: 1. Paraśiva-tattva, 2. ten Vidyā-tattvas (consisting of five deities, Brahma, Vīṣṇu, Rudra, Īśvara and Sadāśiva and five Śaktis) and 3. twenty-five Ātma-tattvas, namely, five senses, five motor organs, five gross elements, five tanmātras (objects of senses) and four inner instruments and soul[19] Sometimes the tanmātras and sometimes gross elements are substituted for airs (Samāna, Udāna, Apāna, Prāṇa and Vyāna).

There is a still simpler account, according to which, creation consists of only eight principles, namely, the five material elements, sun, moon and soul. This account provided by Tōṇṭada Siddhaliṅga Śivayōgi is as follows:

The Substance is the name of Parabrahma;
From it was born the soul; from the soul the ākāśa;
From the ākāśa was born the air; from the air fire;
From the fire was born the water; from the water the earth;
It should be understood that all these are born from Śiva's mouth[20].

Allama Prabhu's opinion is similar[21].

But these principles do not become the world on their own. They combine with one another, says Tōṇṭada Siddhaliṅga Śivayōgi, in different proportions as per the direction of their Adhidēvatās (superintending deities) and create variety of things[22]. But he himself says elsewhere, that out of Brahma, humans, gods, demons, egg-born (aṇḍaja), sweat-born (svēdaja), seed-born (udbija) and foetus-born (jarāyuja) – the entire animate and inanimate beings were born[23].

Though the Vacanakāras believe that the Sādākhyas (or Adhidēvatās), like Brahma, Viṣṇu, Rudra, etc. engage in creation they believe, in the final analysis all of them are but the different

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forms of Paraśiva[24]. This implies that Paraśiva at different stages of creation assumes different forms of Adhidēvatās.

4. The Purpose of Creation

Of all cosmological questions the one related to the purpose of creation is very difficult to answer. The early Greek philosophers showed keen interest in the nature, origin and cause of the cosmos, but did not show the same interest in the purpose of creation. Perhaps, they thought that speculating the purpose was beyond the human intelligence. But the Vacanakāras cannot avoid this question. They believe that Śiva could not have created this world without a purpose. Our observation forces us to believe that the world is not the result of fortuitous combination of material elements, but the creation of an intelligent being and that nothing in the world is accidental, causeless and purposeless. That is why Akka Mahādēvi asks, 'Who fed the sour water to citrus fruits like orange, lemon, mango, *mādala*? And who watered the sweet water to the plants which yield sugarcane, plantain, jackfruit and coconuts?'[25] and expects us to answer that it is God. To our limited minds existence of moral and natural evil may look like partial chaos. But our observation of variety, complex and systematic construction of things and a perfect governance of causal law forces us to infer an intelligent and purposive Maker.

Tōṇṭada Siddhaliṅga Śivayōgi gives very vague answer when the question of purpose of creation confronts him. Even the other Vacanakāras have not tried to give a clear, cogent answer. We can deal with two answers.

1. One answer given by the Vacanakāras is that the act of creation began with the movement of Śakti that was with Śiva[26]. This would mean that Śiva got the impetus to create from an external, insentient Śakti. We can reply to this in this way. Once Śakti becomes a quality of Śiva, Śiva and Śakti get each other's quality. So, Śakti is no more insentient now. Actually, Śakti is not external to Śiva. It was there in him unmanifest. It is irrational to imagine that it came from nowhere. The two manifest as one unit, called, Śiva-Śakti-sampuṭa (Śiva-

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Śakti-complex). So, Śiva can think (mental act) and become the world (physical act).

2. Many Vacanakāras advance the theory that Paraśiva indulges in creation, preservation and destruction for his sportive pleasure ('līlā', 'vinōda' or līlā-vinoda). Svatantra Siddha-liṅgēśvara says that the great Maker created the world for vinōda of his Śakti. For his vinōda he created numberless worlds, mountains, stars, thunder and lightning, sun, moon, death, Karma and dissolution . . . (and) 84 lacs of living beings". At the end, he says that nobody can know the secret of his rule[27]. But when Akka Mahādēvi says that "God created the whole universe for his own vinōda; he covered the whole world for his own vinōda; he made the living beings move in endless pain for his own vinōda"[28] we are forced to ask "Is Śiva a sadist?" Does not the concept of creation for vinōda contradict Śiva's being eternally content (nitya-tṛpta)?

In response to these objections it may be argued that as Śiva is constitutionally Ānanda (bliss), he creates the world, not for some more bliss (Ānanda), but out of Ānanda, just as an artist creates a piece of art out of his pleasure which becomes creative urge. To say of Śakti's primordial agitation as responsible for Paraśiva's idea to create is the same as saying that his creative urge rises out of his Ānanda. It is also worth recalling that the very nature of Śakti is activity and productivity. If Śakti is dormant, it is pralaya (dissolution) and if it is active it is creation. However, Śakti is not external to Śiva, it is his integral part. But to know the purpose of creation is beyond the human understanding. This is why sometimes līlā is compared to smile of a baby. Why the baby smiles when nobody is talking to it, we cannot know. Why Śiva's bliss turns into creation, we cannot know. That would mean that unknowability of the purpose or secret of creation is *līlā* or *līlā-vinōda*. So just because we cannot know the purpose of creation we cannot conclude that it is purposeless or that it is for selfish pleasure or sadistic pleasure.

We can tackle this problem from another angle. Akka Mahādēvi says,

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When 'I-sense' is born, bondage is born;
With the birth of bondage is ignorance born;
With ignorance desire;
With desire is born anger;
When I, befogged in anger's smoke forget Thee,
I succumb to the world's pain . . .[29]

She wants to drive home the point that our earthly existence is inherently associated with ignorance, desire, anger, etc. which prompt us to do selfish acts which, in turn, push us to bondage. So the problem for the Śaraṇas is not why the sun and the stars are created, but why man is created, or why he is in Bhava (Saṃsāra). For them creation of man is primary concern and that of the world secondary. This means that the purpose of creation is that man should live in the world and experience happiness and unhappiness according to his previous sinful and virtuous acts. There seems to be another purpose, equally important, revealed specially in the Vacanas of Basavaṇṇa. Basavaṇṇa many a time says that he was created, that is, sent down to earth, so that he should learn the right ways and means of liberation from the Śaraṇas[30]. He adds that it is not enough for God to create man, but should also put him in the right track[31]. Sometimes he seems to convey that man and world are created for each other. He emphasizes that God has created the world as a place of man's spiritual training. God, like a merchant, sits with his goods spread out for sale on a no-profit-no-loss basis[32]. In other words, he judges people impartially and people should take note of it. Again Basavaṇṇa says that the world is maker's mint, a place where one should shape one's personality[33]. Truthfulness takes us to God's world and deceitfulness to the mortal world[34]. In short, man should avoid the evil ways of Bhavi and choose the way of Bhakta. It is for this purpose that Śiva created our body, intellect, mind, senses, etc. and placed us in the environment due to our past Karmas. If he had not endowed us with body, mind etc. and the environment we would not have been able to achieve merit or demerit or to undergo spiritual discipline. His purpose in

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providing these is that the humans should be able to attain unity with Liṅga from which he has been divided.

This intention of Paraśiva is also suggested in the births of Gurus and Jaṅgamas. According to all the Vacanakāras, Guru and Jaṅgama are incarnation of Paraśiva. Cennabasavaṇṇa says, "Hara (Śiva) in order to show his human form came to the mortal world in the form of holy Guru"[35]. Tōṇṭada Siddhaliṅga Śivayogi says, "Paraśiva himself in the form of Guru acted by initiating the disciple"[36]. Similarly, Svatantra Siddhaliṅgēśvara says, "Śiva himself appeared in the form of Guru, guided me to cross the ocean of bondage and helped me see the undifferentiated transcendent consciousness in every part of the universe"[37]. Other Vacanakāras support this view. So it becomes clear that the Vacanakāras are of the unanimous opinion that the purpose of Paraśiva's creation is to appear in the form of Guru or Jaṅgama in order to help mankind achieve liberation.

5. The Nature of the world

From the above discussion we can infer that according to the Vacanakāras, the world is subject to two kinds of causal laws, namely, the empirical laws or laws of nature and supernatural (divine) and moral laws. Sensible objects which are different forms of Śakti act and react upon one another in accordance with the laws of nature. In addition to these, there is an imperceptible or supernatural cause which controls and directs these forms of Śakti from within. Though we can know by inference that the Śakti originally must have been simple (formless) that it was inseparably related to Paraśiva is a non-empirical truth. In this sense, therefore, man is not an accidental or mechanical combination of physical, chemical, biological and psychical forces, but a teleological synthesis of these forces which are subjected to both laws of nature and supernatural laws. This synthesis, like the physical world, is entirely pervaded by Liṅga.

The word 'universe' ('prapañca') applies to both mortal world and the other worlds. Many Vacanakāras speak of three

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worlds – the mortal (martya), heaven (svarga) and hell (naraka), while some others speak of fourteen worlds, including the mortal world. However, one Bālasaṅgayya speaks in his *Sakalāgama-śirōmaṇi* of two hundred and twenty-four worlds, their names, width, the superintending deities who rule them, etc[38]. According to Allama Prabhu, the area of the earth is extended very vastly[39] including human inhabitation. Some believe that there are living beings not only on the earth, but in other worlds – gods, demons, goblins, gaṇas, etc.

Likewise, the Vacanakāras believe that our birth in a particular family, life in a particular environment and our experience of pain and pleasure cannot be explained by empirical laws, but by the law of Karma. Basavaṇṇa's regret that his present life has become a noose because he ignored Liṅga and Jaṅgama in the previous life represents[40] the Liṅgāyat stand. It is impossible to escape the consequence of Karma because Paraśiva has designed man's life in strict conformity to our past Karmas. But this need not drive him to pessimism, because he is promised that man is a residence of six forms of Liṅga, namely, Ācāra-liṅga, Śiva-liṅga, etc. which he can realise by means of spiritual forces called Bhaktis (pure Śaktis) with which he is equipped.

Samsāra: Many people think, wrongly, that since Basava regards the world and one's own body as Prasāda (Paraśiva's gift), he could not have authored the Vacanas which speak of his hatred to the world. They even surmise that either all such Vacanas must be fake or he must have written them when he was still a Śaiva. This objection is based on their failure to distinguish between world and Saṃsāra.

For one who is trained in the Liṅgāyat-yōga (Ṣaṭ-sthala-yōga) the world is Prasāda of Liṅga; his own entire person is Prasāda-kāya (Prasāda-person). For a worldling the same is a place of happiness and unhappiness. But for the creator it is neither the world of a Bhakta nor the world of a Bhavi.

All Indian philosophers, except the Cārvākas, believe in the doctrine of Karma and rebirth. According to Liṅgāyatism,

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man, because of forgetfulness, thinks wrongly that he is not Liṅga, but a separate individual, that he should live for himself and his own kith and kin and that sensual pleasure is the goal of life. Then he begins to do all kinds of acts and as a result, is bound to Karma and rebirth. In each rebirth he is guided by forgetfulness, on the one hand, and the results of Karma, on the other. In this way he is caught in vicious circle of Karma and rebirth. This cycle is called Saṃsāra, Bhava, Bhava-cakra, Bhava-bandhana (bondage), etc.

It can be noted that while the world is created by God which in itself is neither good nor bad, Saṃsāra, created by man himself, is sometimes good and sometimes bad for him. Sometimes the Vacanakāras describe Saṃsāra as world created by God out of Māyā. What they mean is Saṃsāra owes its existence to man's forgetfulness. Each man lives in own Saṃsāra, which is purely subjective. It exists as long as man's forgetfulness lasts. Once he is convinced that he is not an individual separated from others and Liṅga, the Saṃsāra vanishes from him and he begins to live in God. He continues to deal with the world, not as Saṃsāra, but as a place where he, God and the world are united inseparably. In other words, he experiences himself as God and the world, not as different from him.

Though Saṃsāra is man-made and temporary the worldling wrongly thinks that it is objective and permanent. When he realizes that his existence and suffering have a strong bond, and decides to break it, and often fails, he begins to hate Saṃsāra. The Vacanas of Basavaṇṇa[41] called Saṃsāra-hēya-sthala, reflect the disappointment of a Bhakta who makes serious efforts to overcome Saṃsāra and fails.

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CHAPTER SIX:

PHILOSOPHY OF SOUL (ĀTMAN)

While the ancient Greek philosophers began their philosophy with cosmological questions, the ancient Indian philosophers began their philosophy with enquiry into Ātman (soul). In fact, the Upaniṣads define philosophy as enquiry into one's own Ātman.

When primitive man noticed the cessation of physical and psychological activities at death, he might have inferred that something different from the body had left. When he dreamt of some relative or friend who was dead long ago, or when he noticed that his body was still lying in the same place while he visited a far off place in his dream, he might have inferred similarly. For him this immaterial thing might not be the spiritual substance of which the Upaniṣads speak as the highest reality and into which they say one should enquire, but surely it was something different from the body.

Though Plato had made feeble efforts to infer a soul from the psychological and physical activities of man, it is Descartes who made vigorous attempts to philosophically establish the existence of soul, a spiritual substance. Descartes argued that one may doubt the existence of all things in the world including one's own body, but one cannot doubt the existence of one's own thinking substance. As 'I think, but I do not exist' is a gross self-contradiction, it follows necessarily that I (my soul) must exist. A similar attempt was made by Śaṅkara. But both meet grave end when subjected to criticism. For example, one, like Russell, may object that 'I think' refers to a thought but why should it refer to a thinking substance?[1]

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That is, why should we draw a conclusion which is not in the premises? Moreover, the thinking may be the act of a material substance (as Cārvāka argued) or Skandha (group of five groups, as the Sarvāstivādins argued), which disintegrates after Nirvāṇa.

Modern scientists argue that man evolved from apes, apes from amoeba and amoeba from matter. Therefore, for them soul is not a spiritual substance capable of existing independently of matter, but an epiphenomenon.

But for the Vacanakāras, as also for the Upaniṣadic thinkers, brain is not soul, but something which expresses mental activities. Mental events like desire, purpose, reasoning, etc. are not like physico-chemical changes that take place in material things. The Vacanakāras have made no philosophical attempt to prove the existence of a spiritual substance. Yet they believed in a soul. Their conviction in a soul was based, not on logical argument or scripture, but on mystical intuition or self-experience (svānubhāva). What is more, to them mystic intuition is the ultimate test of metaphysical truths. Yet they conclude that soul cannot be known as an object. Arivina Māritande says,

We can pluck the flower which has fragrance,
But can we pluck the air filled with fragrance?
We can know the body which has housed a soul,
But can we know the soul housed in a body? . . .[2]

The Vacanakāras distinguish between mind (manas) which can be known and the soul which cannot be known. Ādayya says,

We know the mind which has the states of waking,
Dreaming, deep sleep, stupor,
Knowledge and ignorance,
Wrong beliefs and no-beliefs,
Ego and selfishness, sensation of sight, taste, etc.
But can we know the soul which is
Consciousness and the basis of all forms of
knowledge?
The soul is the witness in all our experiences . . .[3]

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Ādayya thinks that psychical activities are possible at all if mind is intelligised by the soul with which it is associated, that soul cannot be known as an object and that it is just a witness. It cannot be known because it does not have perceptible quality like colour, weight, smell, etc. Even if it somehow becomes able to know, it cannot know itself, just as eyes which can see all things but themselves. In other words, it cannot be both subject and object simultaneously. As Allama Prabhu says, "If I claim to know myself, am I different from myself? If I claim to know you, am I different from you?"[4]. One who claims to self-knowledge is already devoured by ignorance, because if one places oneself in the place of subject in relation to the Absolute as object, one is already far from the Absolute[5].

It is perplexing that the Vacanakāras who insist on the unknowability of Ātman, set self-knowledge as the goal of spiritual life. To quote Allama Prabhu again, "What is knowledge that knows not oneself? What is ignorance if it forgets not oneself?"[6] That is, all knowledge is a waste if it is not self-knowledge (svānubhāva or tanna tānariyuvudu). This perplexity can be solved if the meanings of self (I) and knowledge or experience are explained. The word 'I' is used in three senses. (a) In knowing or experiencing an external object, I am directly aware of the object or its details (such as colour, weight, smell, etc.) and of myself indirectly and vaguely. Without self-awareness I cannot be aware of any external object. But since awareness of myself as a subject is not awareness of my qualities, I cannot know it as an object. As was stated earlier, I cannot be subject and object simultaneously.

(b) I may be aware of my accidents, such as my name, height, job, relation, etc. but such knowledge is not redeeming knowledge.

(c) By 'I' or 'myself' Svatantara Siddaliṅgēśvara means the following.

One, having discerned the eternal from the transient,
Realizes that he is not the body made of the material elements–

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Earth, water, fire, air and sky –
Nor that he is body, which like a toy of clay,
That houses the inner instruments, the senses and sensations,
Nor that he is a Jīva who is a storehouse of fears,
And doubts, diseases, the six enemies (of spiritual life).
He who realizes that he is the real soul, which is not subject
To this world and the other, nor to bodily qualities,
Nor to mental modification, nor to ignorance
And that he is the all-pervasive Paraśiva . . .[7]

This is the Vacana which represents the Liṅgāyat meaning of 'soul' which is but Paraśiva. Sometimes Ātman (Aṅga) is said to be part of Liṅga. When Tōṇṭada Siddhaliṅga Śivayōgi says,

The Impartite Śiva-principle by the vibration of his Śakti
Divided itself into two –
One is Liṅga-sthala, the other Aṅga-sthala . . .[8]

he means that the souls (Aṅga-sthala) were already there in Liṅga and were essentially identical to Liṅga. Those who forget this are fools and are subject to existential suffering. As Tōṇṭada Siddhaliṅga Śivayōgi says,

Gold is the same both in the beginning and in the end;
Just because the jewel appears different from
Its natural form, can it be said to be really different?
The pure God himself divided into two
And appeared as the individual soul and the Lord.
Without knowledge of the truth about
Who the Lord is and who the individual soul is
You have become fools!
As long as one has the adjuncts of body-sense,
One is individual soul;
One who loses the adjunct of the body-sense in the Śiva-sense,
Forgets the distinction

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Between the individual soul and the Supreme Soul
And becomes the Supreme Thing . . .[9]

Basavaṇṇa expresses the same truth in different words. For the omnipresent Liṅga moving is impossible and unnecessary, whereas the living beings who house the Liṅga move about. So, while the former is sthāvara (immovable), the latter are Jaṅgama (mobile), but the sthāvara and Jaṅgama are the same'[10].

JĪVA, JĪVĀTMAN, AṄGA

One may object that if the individual soul (Aṅga) and universal soul (Liṅga) are identical there is no necessity of the long and strenuous spiritual discipline leading to the experience of oneness with Liṅga. In answer it may be said that though the two are essentially identical the individual soul in its empirical condition is limited by certain adjuncts like forgetfulness (marevu), Karma-results, etc. Because of his marevu man wrongly thinks that he is different from Liṅga and that material pleasure is the goal of life and in order to get it, he is engaged in all kinds of action and as a result he has to reap good and bad fruits in future or in future births. But in future births also the same story repeats. This means he is caught in a cycle of births and deaths (bhava-cakra), from which he cannot easily escape.

In the empirical state soul is called Jīva, Jīvātma, Aṅga, Piṇḍa, etc. It is necessarily associated with body made of five gross elements, five motor organs, five senses, four cognitive instruments and five-fold sensations (tanmātras). Sometimes five sensations, sometimes five gross elements are replaced with five airs (samāna, udāna, apāna, vyāna and prāṇa). These twenty-four principles are sometimes classified under three heads – gross body (sthūla-śarīra) made of five material elements, subtle body (sūkṣma-śarīra) made of five senses, five motor organs, five kinds of sensations, intellect, mind and will and the causal body (kāraṇa-śarīra) consisting of the bound soul, ego and Karma-seeds. When the gross body dies, the

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bound soul and ego go to next birth as determined by Karma-seeds.

Some Vacanakāras speak of three Aṅgas, Tyāgāṅga, Bhōgāṅga and Yōgāṅga, which are said to be synonyms, respectively, of gross, subtle and causal bodies. It is said that Iṣṭa-liṅga is related to the gross body or Tyāgāṅga, Prāṇa-liṅga to subtle body or Bhōgāṅga and Bhāva-liṅga to causal body or Yōgāṅga. However, a proper interpretation of these three concepts seems to show that they are different from the three-fold body. The concept of Tyāgāṅga means the body which is free from the evils that impede the spiritual path. Tyāga means abandoning; the seeker has abandoned the unholy desires of selfish material pleasures; thus he has purified his body in two ways - by wearing Iṣṭa-liṅga on it and by freeing it from material desires. Bhōgāṅga is the body that enjoys (bhōga). The seeker is advised, not to give up all pleasures, but to enjoy them as Prasāda of Śiva. However, he should refrain from immoral pleasures. For example, he can enjoy conjugal bliss, but should avoid adultery. He should enjoy all that comes to his lot as Prasāda of Śiva and desist from dishonest earnings. He has sanctified his subtle body by constantly thinking of his soul as Śiva. The concept of Yōgāṅga means that the seeker has to regard his body as that of Paraśiva (Liṅga). This is possible for a mystic (Śivayōgi) who identifies himself with Liṅga and purifies his ego Bhāva or Ahaṃbhāva). Thus the Tanu-traya (three-fold body) concept unlike Aṅga-traya concept, it can be noted, has no reference to spiritual development.

ĀTMAN, THE COGNITIVE INSTRUMENTS AND KNOWLEDGE

What is it that knows, feels and wills – the soul (spiritual substance), the products of material Śakti with which it is associated or a combination of these two? This question is important for the Vacanakāras, not as a mere philosophical question, but as a question related to spiritual life. When Basavaṇṇa asks,

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Who knows, brother, the distinction
Between the two Karmas, merit and demerit?
Who experiences their fruits?
It cannot be body, because it is only earthen;
It cannot be soul, because it is mere space . . .[11]

he is revealing the attributes of body and soul, of which Jīvātma is made. He notes that the body exclusive of soul cannot know as it is made of insentient Śakti, nor can soul exclusively of Śakti, as it is devoid of cognitive organs. A similar problem is raised by Aṅga Sōṅkina Liṅgatande. He asks,

When the vices and virtues touch a person,
Do their effects touch his body or soul?
If you answer 'the body,' body cannot touch without soul;
If your answer 'the soul' it cannot feel,
Except being behind the mind . . .[12]

From this it follows that the theory that Ātman knows, feels and wills is rejected and the theory that only a complex of soul and cognitive instruments does the psychical activities is proposed.

The soul, residing in the centre of the body,
Touches by hand, hears by ear, smells by nose,
Sees by eyes, eats by mouth and
Is the same behind the five senses . . .[13]

Though Arivina Māritande uses in this Vacana the word 'soul' (Ātman), he means by it individual soul (jīvātma), which is a complex of body, senses, inner instruments, etc. He is making an important epistemological point. He says that the same individual soul receives sensations of touch, sound, smells, etc. If the sensations of forms were supplied to soul A, those of touch to soul B, and so on, synthesis, analysis and comparison, would not be possible. If the idea of man, the idea of eating, and the idea of mango were supplied to three separate souls the proposition that man eats mango would not be possible. Moreover, the soul that knows them must be self-identitial and

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permanent and if it changes every moment, as the early Buddhist held, analysis, synthesis, comparison, etc. would not be possible. This is comparable exactly to the Śiva-Śakti complex. Śakti (energy) is by nature active and productive, but it actually exhibits activity and productivity only when it gets the impetus from a conscious agent, i.e., God (Śiva). In the pre-creation state Śiva, the infinite consciousness, without the creative urge and the Śakti, without the impetus, were there. But once Śiva becomes aware of himself consciousness and Śakti get the attribute of each other – i.e., it is the complex which is involved in self-evolution. Similarly, the individual soul and Śakti, when combined, become able to perform psychological and physical activities.

Our knowledge of the external world, according to the Vacanakāras, is the result of cooperation of the senses, on the one hand, and the internal instruments, on the other. The senses like eyes, nose, etc. are called external instruments (bāhya-karaṇas), because they are outer-directed or object-oriented; while mind (manas), intellect (buddhi), ego (ahaṃ) and citta are called internal instruments (antaḥkaraṇas). For example, when I am moving in the market, I get several sensations simultaneously – forms, smells, sounds, etc. When my mind concentrates on only one (e.g. smell) my intellect determines the smell as the smell of jasmine; as a result, I am able to say 'It is jasmine'; simultaneously, because of my ego, I am able to say 'I know it is jasmine'. Because of citta I feel happy or unhappy and decide to search for happiness and avoid unhappiness. Both the external and internal instruments get the impetus from the individual soul. The total result is the cognition that I know that it is jasmine.

The Vacanakāras are, in fact, not interested in these psycho-epistemological details; their interest is in the wise deployment of them in such a way that helps their spiritual progress. For them two points are necessary: (1) that senses, the inner instruments, motor organs, are made of insentient Śakti and when they get the impetus from the individual souls, they begin to perform their functions. They have no freedom to

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exchange their functions or function in a way different from their natural way. (2) The soul in itself is a spiritual entity, having no corporeal organs. But as the two combine, as in man, they can function physically and psychologically. Neither of them, independently of the other, can exhibit its attributes. This is stressed by Arivina Māritande in his Vacana as follows:

Once the body perishes, the individual soul loses its base;
Once the individual soul vanishes,
The body cannot stay even for a day;
There is no way of catching one without the other . . .[14]

In another Vacana he makes another point. The soul and the complex of cognitive instruments are not only interdependent, but also are interactive.

As the bodily pleasure is felt by the soul,
As the pain and pleasure of the soul get expressed in the body,
The body and the soul are not different or opposite . . .[15]

The problem of how the cognitive instruments made of insentient Śakti and the conscious entity can influence each other has been addressed by Vacanakāras in their own way. Just as Śiva and Śakti do not come from different directions to make an inseparable complex Brahmāṇḍa (the universe), so the body, cognitive instruments and the soul do not come from different directions to create Piṇḍāṇḍa (the individual). The two are only logically different, but ontologically identical. To say that a man has mind implies necessarily that his mind is somehow associated with and intelligised by spirit. As long as we think that Śakti and Ātman exist in separate space-parts before they came together, we keep asking the wrong question "How do they influence each other?"

ĀTMAN IS PARAŚIVA

The Vacanakāras, like some Upaniṣadic seers, use the word 'Ātman' to refer either to the individual soul or to the universal soul (Liṅga). But just for clarity of expression let us

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reserve the word 'Paramātman' to refer to Paravastu (Liṅga) and 'Jīvātma' or 'Aṅga' or 'Ātman' to refer to individual soul. The creation Vacanas clearly reveal the identical nature of the two. When for example, Tōṇṭada Siddhaliṅga Śivayōgi says,

> **The Impartite Śiva-principle by the vibration of his Śakti**
> **Divided itself into two –**
> **One is Liṅga-sthala, the other Aṅga-sthala . . .**[16]

it becomes clear that Liṅga is universal soul (Paravastu or Paramātman) and Aṅga is individual soul and the two are essentially one. The same author, again, says,

> **Gold is the same both in the beginning and in the end;**
> **Just because the jewel appears different from**
> **Its natural form, can it be said to be really different?**
> **The pure God himself divided into two**
> **And appeared as the individual soul and the Lord.**
> **Without knowledge of the truth about**
> **Who the Lord is and who the individual soul is**
> **You have become fools! . . .**[17]

Forgetting that one is identical with Paraśiva is the biggest impediment in the spiritual path. If one overcomes the sense of individuality and separation he becomes Paraśiva.

When the Vacanakāras use the word 'Aṅga' to mean a part (of Paraśiva), we must note two points. (1) They know that it is not really a part, but in its empirical state it *appears to be a part* of Paraśiva. While for the mystic who has become one with Liṅga there is no difference or separation between himself and Liṅga, others who have not experienced oneness, think wrongly that Aṅga is a part of Liṅga. If Aṅga (soul) is considered as part of Paraśiva, it would imply that Paraśiva is divisible (khaṇḍita). If a thing is divided into A, B and C, it is possible to separate them from one another. Once a thing is divided it becomes delimited. A limited thing is not God. (2) Sometimes they use the word 'Aṅga' to mean body, the residence of Paraśiva. To say man is a temple of Śiva is to say that man's body is made of

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Śakti and his soul is Liṅga. In that case, the implication that residence ought to be different from the resident cannot be ignored. In this sense, however, space (*ākāśa*) cannot be divided. Though for practical purpose we can treat the space in a pot as a part of the greater space, the latter in the strict sense of the term cannot be divided into separable parts. Similarly, when it is said that the soul exists in every part (*aṅga*) or body of Paraśiva, it does not follow that the soul is a piece of Paraśiva or that it exists separately from Paraśiva, because Paraśiva is indivisible (*akhaṇḍita*)[18]. The Viśiṣṭādvaitins think that all individual souls are separate from one another and also from Brahman, and that Brahman, making them his body, resides in their innermost centres. But for the Vacanakāras no soul is different from any other soul or from Paramātman. It is meaningful to say that soul is in a person, but meaningless to say that Liṅga is in his soul, as Liṅga is his soul in reality.

PLURALITY OF SOULS

In Advaita, body, senses, etc. which are the associates of the empirical soul are regarded as reality, lasting only as long as ignorance lasts. Once man realizes his soul as infinite consciousness, he also realizes the illusoriness of the individuality of soul, his own body, senses, etc. Many Vacanas speak of creation as self-transformation of the Śiva-Śakti complex into innumerable animals, humans, etc. each having its own soul, body, senses, motor organs, internal instruments, etc. But as we noted in the previous section, Paraśiva, like space, appears to be divisible, though in reality he is indivisible. So the ascription of self-division to Paraśiva is not contradictory to his indivisibility. Liṅgāyats hold that though self-transformation of Śiva is a reality, plurality of souls is not a reality. Once the individual soul identifies itself with Liṅga, its separateness, which appeared to be real in its empirical state, is wiped out. As Basavaṇṇa would say[19], a snake pit may have many mouths, but the snake rests in only one place, bottom (similarly, in the empirical state souls may be appear to be many, but when they attain Mōkṣa, they all converge to Liṅga and lose their individuality and plurality). This concept is unlike

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that of Viśiṣṭādvaita, according to which even if the souls attain Mōkṣa, they retain their individuality and separateness from Brahman.

Rāmānuja and Madhva speak of nitya-nāraki (eternally damned souls), nitya-mukta (eternally liberated souls) and mukti-yōgya (souls which are eligible for Mōkṣa). While Lakṣmī, Brahma and others are eternally liberated, some humans by their pure and steadfast devotion become eligible for Mōkṣa (mukti-yogya). But some souls are so wicked they are eternally damned. The Vacanakāras, in contrast, believe that all souls are eligible for Mōkṣa. As Basavaṇṇa would say,

Man, O man, you who committed the sinful acts,
Man, O man, you who killed Brahmin,
Do say but once, 'I surrender'.
If you say once 'I surrender',
All sins flee away . . .[20]

According to Vacanakāras, no person is so impure as to be regarded damned eternally. Offering hope to everybody, the Vacanakāras assert that no Ātman need be afraid of being *nitya-nāraki*. However, Tōṇṭada Siddhaliṅga Śivayōgi speaks of some devotees of Śiva who are eternally liberated[21]. Madhva also speaks of Ānanda-tāratamya (hierarchy of bliss), i.e., some liberated souls enjoy more bliss and some less (how Madhva could determine this is a problem). But the Vacanakāras do not believe in degrees of ecstasy.

DO LIṄGĀYATS BELIEVE IN DOCTRINE OF KARMA AND REBIRTH?

Do Liṅgāyats believe in Karma and rebirth? This question must be distinguished from the question, 'Do Liṅgāyats have Karma and rebirth?' Those who fail to distinguish between the two rush to answer the first question in the negative. They are often misled by the statements made by a few English or non-Kannada authors who have no knowledge of the original Vacanas and also some Kannada authors who are eager to make Basavaṇṇa a materialist. The fact is that all Vacanakāras, like Basavaṇṇa, Allama Prabhu and others do believe in the doctrine

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of Karma and rebirth. This is evidenced by their frequent use of the word 'Bhavi'[22]. Though Liṅgāyats use the word 'Bhavi' to distinguish themselves from non-Liṅgāyats, much as Muslims and Christians use the words 'Kafir' and 'heathen' to distinguish themselves from, respectively, non-Muslims and non-Christians, the word etymologically applies to all who are born repeatedly. This necessarily implies that Liṅgāyats do not have rebirth, because they attain Mōkṣa in this very life and that the Bhavis (non-Liṅgāyats) have repeated births.

The second evidence which supports our claim is the Vacanakāras' use of the word 'Bhava'[23]. The word 'Bhava' or 'Saṃsāra' means a place where man being reborn experiences happiness and unhappiness in accordance with the acts done in previous birth. In one of his Vacanas Basavaṇṇa says "O God, I swear in your name and names of your Śaraṇas that I will be a Śiva-devotee in my next seven births"[24]. One may object that if a Liṅgāyat is believed to attain Mōkṣa in the very first life why should he take six more births? It may be replied that there is a belief that if one is born several times as Śiva-devotee he will take his next birth as a Liṅgāyat. Therefore, though all Liṅgāyats are Śiva-devotees, all Śiva-devotees are not Liṅgāyats. In the next Vacana[25] Basavaṇṇa says that he was sent down from Kailāsa to the earth so that he learns certain other practices from Śaraṇas. So these two Vacanas together mean that he will be born as a Śaiva in the next six births and as a Liṅgāyat in the seventh birth. Once he is born as a Liṅgāyat he is free from rebirth, as he attains Mōkṣa in that very life. So, Basavaṇṇa and other Vacanakāras believed that Śaraṇas are not, but others are, subject to rebirth.

Basavaṇṇa[26] and others[27] have written many Vacanas under the title 'Saṃsāra-hēya-sthala', i.e., Vacanas which express their hatred to Bhava or Saṃsāra (repeated births). Basavaṇṇa says that he is reborn because in the previous life he ignored Liṅga and Jaṅgama[28] and also warns that if one tells lies or ignores Jaṅgama one will be reborn as such and such and face the appropriate awards.

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KARMA AND FREE WILL

Did the Vacanakāras believe in free will? Some Vacanas give affirmative and some negative answers. The following three Vacanas of Basavaṇṇa

1. **Thou, Father, madest me come**
   Blind through my mother's womb –
   Through wretched births![29]
2. **What you have made me that I am . . .**[30]
3. **Where you choose I be born**
   There needs must I be born.
   Where you say I should die
   There needs I must die . . .[31]

in unambiguous words assert that my birth, my activities, my happiness and suffering, my death, etc. are not results of my free choice, but dictates of Paraśiva. Just as a stone thrown into space has no freedom to disobey the law of gravity and must fall to the ground, so man has no freedom to disobey the dictates of the Lord.

This conclusion implies (1) that our happiness or unhappiness is not our choice, but is caused by the Lord's Anugraha or Tirōdhāna and (2) that we are inescapably forced to experience it.

Even if we argue that it is not Śiva, but our own Karma that is the cause of our birth, death, position, happiness and happiness, etc. the conclusion is inevitable. Basavaṇṇa says that we cannot develop devotion to Śiva, unless we free ourselves from past sins[32] and till such a time we have to suffer. We are bogged in Saṃsāra such that we cannot make any progress. So we, instead of deciding to make self-effort pray to Lord to lift us up from the wretched condition[33].

If my birth, parentage, position, bondage and release are decided by God, it means that man without free will is just a puppet in his hands. In such a case, happiness of some, unhappiness of others, health of some, ill-health of others and so on, are only the capricious awards of God. Even if he is said

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to force some people to do virtuous acts and some to do wicked acts and to award happiness and unhappiness accordingly, he cannot be freed from capriciousness. But even the heavenly bliss in the absence of freedom of will lose its value. However, our conclusion that man has no freedom of will runs contrary to other Vacanas which prescribe religious and moral acts. So, we are forced to ask, why should we be asked to wear and worship Liṅga, perform honest Kāyaka, refrain from telling lies, violence, adultery and practise truthfulness, Yōga and so on?

However, there are also Vacanas authored by Basavaṇṇa himself and others which state that man does have free will. These authors have not employed philosophical argument to prove the free will, but their Vacanas do imply that they believed in free will. Their exhortation to the devotees to practise morality, religiousness and spirituality with a view to attaining of Mōkṣa proves that the devotees are free to accept or reject morality, religiousness and spirituality. As Basavaṇṇa says, one is free to choose to tell truth or lies and their results, hell or heaven[34].

This assumption that man has free will is contrary neither to the law of Karma, nor to the divine decision. Man on some occasions – when in anger, for example, behaves as if he is not free; some thieves by habit or force of the environment steal, as if they have no freedom to do otherwise. But at least some people, at least sometimes, exhibit freedom of choice. When nobody is watching me, I decide to pick up the book forgotten by somebody which I need badly, but after much deliberation I decide to do otherwise. But I have to reap the consequences of my acts. But the Karma-results are determined by God. So my birth, relationships, happiness and unhappiness, are allotted to me by God according to my free acts done in the past. I may be a poor man now because of my past Karma but my poverty does not come in the way of my free choice of helping somebody in dire situation. There are stories of Śaraṇas who, though poor, were engaged in Dāsōha. In short, it is because of my free choice I am able to reform my life. ■

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CHAPTER SEVEN:

CONCEPT OF LIBERATION (MŌKṢA)

Liṅgāyats conceive that the *summum bonum* is Mōkṣa, the final and unending freedom from ignorance ('marevu'), which in turn causes freedom from pain and suffering and rebirth. They designate it by various terms like 'Mukti', 'Jīvanmukti', 'Liṅga-aṅga-sāmarasya', 'Liṅgaikya' or 'Śivaikya' (simply 'Aikya'), 'Kaivalya' 'Becoming Bayalu' ('Bayalāguvudu'), 'Nirvāṇa', 'Advaita-sthiti', etc. The terms, namely, 'Nirvāṇa', 'Advaita-sthiti', 'Kaivalya', have already been used by Buddhism, Advaita of Śaṅkara and Sāṅkhya, respectively, in specific senses. Therefore, we are forced to ask whether these terms carry the same connotation in Liṅgāyatism also. At the outset we can answer this question negatively. It is just a case of indiscrete use of language, for these terms used by Liṅgāyats carry no connotations these schools attached to them. Nor should we, therefore, ask whether the Vacanakāras had a clear understanding of their own conception of Mōkṣa. That they had clearly understood their conception is proved by the fact they make clear-cut distinction of their position from those of others. Notwithstanding their indiscrete use of terms we can, therefore, evaluate their position as against others'.

The word 'Kaivalya' ('aloofness') is used by the Sāṅkhya philosophers to refer to the state of liberated soul which is separated, and exists 'aloof' (kēvala), from the Prakṛti. The word 'Nirvāṇa' is used by the early Buddhists to refer to the liberated soul which has become a separate Buddha. The Mahāyānists have used it as identical to Śūnya which has no quality of the material world or soul. None of these words,

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'Nirvāṇa' or 'Kaivalya', means the 'liberated soul's identity with God', which they carry in Liṅgāyatism.

The Śaiva Siddhānta and Nīlakaṇṭha's Śivādvaita hold the dualist view of Mōkṣa, called Caturvidha-padavi (four-fold position). The soul eligible for Mōkṣa has to traverse to Kailāsa, Śiva's world, after the death of the body; secondly, it has to gain proximity to Śiva; later, it has to gain pure form of the Lord before finally merging in him. These stages are called, respectively, Sālōkya, Sāmīpya, Sārūpya and Sāyujya. The last does not mean the liberated soul's indistinguishable union with Śiva, but only an enduring companionship with and service of, Śiva. Its individuality is maintained intact. Nīlakaṇṭha in his *Śrīkaṇṭha-bhāṣya* (a commentary on the *Brahma-sūtras*) advocates a similar view. The argument they offer is that the individual soul is limited in many respects and as such can never be identical to Śiva who is omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, etc.

Liṅgāyats, on the contrary, advocate a non-dualistic view, that the pure soul, Aṅga, in the Mōkṣa state unites with Liṅga indistinguishably like a river in a sea. There are many Liṅgāyats, however, including Basavaṇṇa himself, who seem to support the dualist view. In his Vacanas, Basavaṇṇa[1] praises the sacrifices made by Dāsimayya, Siriyāḷa and Sindhu Ballāḷa (who are famous Śiva devotees) and the highest position (passage to Kailāsa) they got as a reward. On another occasion he says, "No world can match Śiva's world"[2]. But we should note that he only praises their devotion and the reward they got without according the highest value to it. In his other Vacanas he not only distinguishes his position from others but also condemns them vehemently. Similarly, though Uriliṅga Peddi regards[3] the four-fold position (Caturvidha-padavi) favoured by the Śaiva Siddhāntins as the highest reward, he has in many other Vacanas concurred with other Śaraṇas.

In the first place he and others do not believe in the existence of Kailāsa as geographically distant from the mortal world. 1. The dualist Śaivas – the Pāśupatas, the Śaiva

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Siddāntins, etc. – believe in the reality of Kailāsa (the abode of mythological Śiva) as a region geographically away from the mortal world. Basavaṇṇa categorically denying the existence of a separate Divine world, asks, "Are there separate worlds, Divine world and mortal world? The place where a good devotee lives is itself the Divine world"[4]. He elsewhere says, "Telling truth itself is Divine world, telling lies is itself mortal world"[5]. According to him, one who draws a boundary line between Divine world and mortal world does not know how to become a Śaraṇa[6], an advanced spiritual practitioner. Following suit Allama Prabhu says that both Kailāsa which is just a silver mountain and the person sitting there (Śiva) are subject to destruction[7]. Siddharāma ridicules Kailāsa as a desert mountain and Śiva who abides there as a moron[8]. Thus the very idea of other world (*paralōka*) is rejected by the Liṅgāyats.

2. According to the Vacanakāras, Mōkṣa for the dualists which should have been freedom from rebirth is not really freedom from rebirth. They note that those who go to Kailāsa cannot live there permanently, not only because Kailāsa is not itself permanent, but also because their stay is in proportion to the limited puṇya (religious merit) by virtue of which they live there. Allama notes that Sanaka and Sananda of whom mythology speaks as the cohorts of Śiva in Kailāsa are not exempted from death[9]. Rēṇuka, Dāruka, etc., who are also cohorts of Śiva in Kailāsa, are cursed to go back to the earth to preach Vīraśaivism to the mortals. According to the *Siddhānta-śikhāmaṇī*, their assignment of teaching Vīraśaivism to the mortals is a punishment[10]. This aspect of cursed rebirth even after Sāyujya reduces whatever little value it has. If this is so, it is not much different from Saṃsāra or Bhava. As Allama says, "Some devotees cut their heads off and offered them to Śiva, some gouged their eyes out, some cut their intestines and other parts and offered them to Śiva; some went to Kailāsa embodied; but they cannot be considered as Bhaktas; do they know the way to Śiva? Have they escaped Bhava? No. . . Like mortals who are caught in the human Saṃsāra, the gods are caught in

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the celestial Saṃsāra . . . (others) are caught in Sāyujya Saṃsāra . . ."[11]. Some are believed to visit Kailāsa several times and return to the earth equal number of times[12]. In contrast, according to the Vacanakāras, once a person is liberated he is eternally inseparably and indistinguishably united with Śiva. As he has no selfish motives or other defects it is logically impossible for him to be reborn in the mortal world or elsewhere. Therefore, the mad people's effort to attain position in Kailāsa is a sheer waste[13].

3. The dualist idea that Mōkṣa must be attained only after the death of the physical body also comes in for criticism. It presupposes that the soul alone goes to the abode of God leaving behind the dead body, because body which is full of defects and has carnal desires for which the soul has to suffer, is the cause of its separation from God. Contrary to this, the Vacanakāras propose the doctrine of embodied liberation (Jīvanmukti). Since liberation is experiencing oneness with Liṅga, it must be attained while one is alive. One may doubt the possibility of passage to Kailāsa after death, but one cannot doubt one's own embodied liberation.

One's awareness that one is liberated includes (a) experience or knowledge and (b) unbroken enjoyment of bliss. (a) Liberation is not merely escape from suffering, but also a supra-sensory and supra-intellectual perception of reality. It is knowledge that one is infinite consciousness or knowledge (arivu). Liṅgāyats advocate that knowledge (arivu), in addition to devotion (bhakti) and morality, is the sure way to liberation. Knowledge in Liṅgāyatism is knowledge of one's identity with Śiva. Such redeeming knowledge cannot be gained from others but only from one's own mystic experience (svānubhava). Therefore, it necessarily follows that if gaining knowledge is gaining liberation then one must gain knowledge only when one is alive. There is a good reason to consider the doctrine of embodied liberation as more rational than post-mortem liberation. That is why Allama asks, "What do you know about reality? Once dead, what can you perceive?"[14].

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(b) One who has not experienced the bliss of liberation while still alive is deluded to think (wrongly) that the post mortem Sāyujya is the highest goal. But Basavaṇṇa argues that the bliss of becoming one with Śiva in the embodied state is the highest and ridicules the dualist concept. He says, millions of gods like Umā's husband, millions with five faces each, million Sadāśivas like sands on the Gaṅgā are all near God. But none is aware of harmony with Him[15]. Harmony (sāmarasya) with Liṅga is necessarily linked to enjoyment of enduring and unmatched ecstasy.

What he wants to emphasize is the fact that those who choose to spend an enduring fellowship with Śiva after death are like sheep which choose to eat the upper part of the sugar cane not knowing that the lower part is sweeter[16]. It is precisely for this reason that it is wrong to say that one must join God after death and it is right to say that one must realize the truth while alive[17]that he is God.

4. Another aspect of the dualist concept of liberation that makes it despicable is the aspect of dependence on others (parādhīna). The dualist, says Tōṇṭada Siddhaliṅga Śivayōgi, distinguishes between the individual soul defiled by the primordial impurities and the Universal soul which is eternally pure. But for Tōṇṭada Siddhaliṅga Śivayōgi the liberation of the dualist is not real liberation, because it depends for existence on Śiva, the other. Dependency is a mark of defect and a defective soul is not liberated. On this ground he concludes that, therefore, the dualist can never have Mōkṣa[18]. The point is that like the spiritual aspirant, the liberated person depends on Śiva's grace (anugraha) for continuation of life in Kailāsa.

STAGES OF MŌKṢA

Liṅgāyats believe that Mōkṣa is not something that happens in a flash, but a slow and gradual achievement. The spiritual aspirant gradually and slowly frees himself of all causes that have kept him bound to Bhava. This presupposes the Liṅgāyat meta-physiology, according to which, Liṅga has settled in the human body, at five points in the spine and the

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sixth in between the eye brows. The points are called Cakras (plexus) and Liṅga residing in each of them has special name. Thus Liṅga residing in the Ādhāra-cakra, the lowest in the spine, is called Ācāra-liṅga; that residing in the Svādhiṣṭhāna-cakra, Maṇīpūrka-cakra, Anāhata-cakra, Viśuddhi-cakra and Ājñā-cakra is respectively called, Guru-liṅga, Śiva-liṅga, Jaṅgama-liṅga, Prasāda-liṅga and Mahāliṅga. Sometimes the names of Brahma, Viṣṇu, Rudra, Īśvara, Sadāśiva and Upamātīta are substituted for the six names of Liṅga. The aspirant unites with each Liṅga gradually in an ascending order. Sometimes it is said that the Padma at the top of the brain, called Sahasrāra, is the source of nectar (amṛta) sipping which is the final aim of the aspirants.

Each of the above Cakras is made of five elements of which one is predominant. Thus the elements of earth, water, fire, air and sky are predominant, respectively, in Adhāra, Svādhiṣṭhāna, Maṇipūraka, Anāhata and Viśuddhi; and in the Ājñā self (jīva) is predominant. As a result of their predominance the Cakras are defiled and spiritual progress is adversely affected. To master a Cakra is to control the evil effect of its predominant element. This allows the aspirant to unite with Liṅga therein. But to unite with Ācāra-liṅga in Ādhāra-cakra or Guru-liṅga in Svādhiṣṭhāna-cakra is not to attain complete liberation - it is an earlier stage of liberation. One who has completely subdued all the elements and overcome their evil effects and eradicated the marevu (forgetfulness) and the resultant I-sense is completely liberated. When he has destroyed ignorance (marevu) that is innate to the self he is completely pure so that he automatically identifies himself with Liṅga (Paraśiva).

Liṅgaikya

What does the aspirant experience in his mystic experience? A brief description of the final three stages of the mystic experience will be an answer to this. In the first of them he becomes unaware of the external world, his own body and mental states; he then perceives his own self uniting with the

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universal soul; this experience is associated with perception of brilliant light and feeling of incomparable happiness (ānanda). The light is not physical light and the bliss is not the result of contact of senses or mind with any object. This the Vacanakāras have compared it to a river merging in river (or sea), milk in milk, camphor touching fire, space merging in space, etc. In the final stage, he is aware neither of himself as the subject nor of Liṅga in whom he has merged (or Brahman as the Upaniṣads call it) nor of his soul's oneness with Liṅga.

Two clarifications are needed about the last two stages.

(a) The word "Aikya" is the short form of "Liṅgaikya" or "Śivaikya" which means that the liberated person and Liṅga or Śiva are numerically one (ēka, one). Achieving ēkatva or aikya (oneness) or being indistinguishably one with Liṅga is the highest aim of spiritual discipline of Liṅgāyats. This presupposes the doctrine that the soul and God were indistinguishably one in the pre-creation state and after creation of the world and body, senses, mind, etc. man, because of his ignorance forgot his original oneness with Liṅga and began to regard himself as a separate individual. Because of Guru's teaching he has come to know his original nature and after a long and strenuous spiritual discipline he has achieved his oneness with Liṅga. Therefore, becoming Liṅga again is not an achievement of something new, but only a realisation of the original nature.

Achieving oneness with Liṅga is not merely believing or even continuously thinking that one is Liṅga. It is a strong conviction or knowledge that grips the seeker's personality and transforms it thoroughly. This unique conviction is the result of frequent mystic experience and mystics do not hesitate to call it eternal, real knowledge. For the mystics mystic knowledge is knowledge (arivu) proper and empirical knowledge is inferior to it.

Cennabasavaṇṇa[19] and Allama Prabhu[20] compare the union between Aṅga and Liṅga to a part-space merging in the infinite space. This is a near apt analogy because many

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Vacanakāras prefer to call the original state of God "Bayalu" or "Ākāśa" (space), meaning that like physical space, consciousness-space (Cidākāśa or Cid-bayalu), contains in itself all that is. But the analogy of one river merging in another river, employed by Basavaṇṇa[21] may lead to a misconception, if stretched unduly, and may tempt one to object that just as the waters of one river with which another joins increase quantitatively, so the volume of the universal soul increases when the liberated souls merge in it. Two answers may be advanced against this mistaken objection. 1. The objection implies that the universal soul was limited before the liberated individual souls merged in it, but a limited universal soul (Liṅga) is not Liṅga at all. 2. The objector assumes that the soul moves in spatio-temporal conditions before uniting with Liṅga. But the fact is that uniting is not a spatio-temporal act or event at all, firstly because Aṅga and Liṅga are not two distinct entities which are considered to be in separate spaces before they unite. According to Śaivism, the soul may move from the mortal world to Kailāsa, or Śiva may condescend to the earth to take with him the liberated person to Kailāsa. But according to Liṅgāyatism, neither Aṅga nor Liṅga moves. The soul (Aṅga) simply realises that it is Liṅga. The analogy employed by the Kashmir Shaivas may be borrowed here: It is like a man, kidnapped by some shepherds while he was a child, realising that he is a prince, not a shepherd.

(b) For the liberated person he and God are not two but one. When Allama's says,

> **The distinction between I and you**
> **Was there neither then nor now;**
> **Śaraṇa is neither Sālōkya, nor Sāmīpya,**
> **Neither Sārūpya nor Sāyujya . . .**[22]

he means that the earlier false belief that he was distinct from Paraśiva is replaced by the new knowledge of identity between the two. Sometimes he says that when the soul merges in Liṅga it dies and Liṅga survives[23] and compares this to camphor touched by fire. However, what Allama and other Liṅgāyat

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Vacanakāras mean is that liberation is the death or non-existence, not of the individual or the individual soul, but of individuality of the soul. If the liberated person could say, "Neither you exist, nor myself"[24] it should be taken to mean that for a mystic the distinction between subject and object is lost forever. The soul exists, but without its individuality; Liṅga exists, but without its otherness. As long as man is not a subject, he can never know an object. Since in the mystic state he is not aware of himself, he cannot be aware of Liṅga with whom he has united. Liṅga exists as an all-inclusive reality, but not as different or separate from the Aṅga; nor as the object of his worship or meditation. The soul which meditates and Liṅga the object of his meditation cease to exist separately, just as oxygen and hydrogen which compose water cease to exist separately. So there is no contradiction in Allama's statement that neither I nor you exist.

If God is construed as all-pervasive and all-encompassing, there is no reason why the liberated soul, wherever it is, should not unite with Liṅga. In fact, Rāmānuja, who thinks that the liberated soul is of the form of the Lord who is everywhere, has to answer this question. For he thinks, on the one hand, that God is omnipresent and, on the other, that the soul which is consciousness like God does not merge in him indistinguishably in the state of Mōkṣa. If God is omnipresent the liberated soul need not go to the other world; if both God and soul belong to the category of Cit (consciousness) they should unite with each other indistinguishably.

One may object that if the soul (Aṅga) becomes God does it acquire the capacities to do cosmic functions like creation, preservation, etc.? Does it acquire qualities like omnipotence, omniscience, etc? This objection is based on the dual misconception that God is different from the liberated person and that one becomes *like* God. In response it may be replied that just as the all-inclusive Liṅga does not think that the world is different from itself, so also Śaraṇa (the one who has identified

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himself with Liṅga) does not think he, Liṅga and the world are different. Cannabasavaṇṇa says that if the Aikya thinks that he is the world and the world is he, where is the need for him to know the world or God?[25]. When Ādayya says that he salutes a Śaraṇa (Jaṅgama) who has made the whole world his body he means that Jangama is Liṅga[26]. Similarly, Tōṇṭada Siddhaliṅga Śivayōgi uses the same epithets used to describe Paraśiva to describe the liberated person[27].

As long as we think that God is different from us we keep asking, 'How can the Aikya become another creator, preserver, etc.?' If the liberated soul is itself God, there is no room for such question. Some misinterpreting the Liṅgāyats' idea of the soul becoming God may object that if all liberated souls become God, then there will be more than one creator, one maintainer and one destroyer of the world. This objection is based on a wrong conception of 'becoming'. When a man becomes a minister there is a change in his thoughts and actions, but he never says that he was a minister earlier and he now realizes that he is minister. But an Aṅga does not become Liṅga in this manner. He only realizes that he is Liṅga and thinks and behaves accordingly. While a man becoming minister is visible to others, Aṅga's becoming Liṅga is not visible to others. Moreover, the objector fails to differentiate the two senses of the word 'Liṅga'. Liṅga in the primordial state is featureless and formless and Liṅga in the subsequent state becomes a creator, maintainer, etc. When the Aikya (mukta) claims to become Liṅga he does not mean that he has become a creator, maintainer, etc. but Liṅga of the primordial state.

Liṅga-Aṅga-sāmarasya

Liṅga-Aṅga-sāmarasya, also simply called, 'sāmarasya', is often used to refer to the state of an embodied liberated person. The word 'sāmarasya' can be broadly translated as 'harmony'. If some kind of harmony is said to exist between the liberated man and God we have to presume that God and liberated man must be two, not one; and if they are one, we need not think of harmony between them. Even if they are two how can there be harmony between the imperceptible God and man?

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When, for example, a wife's thoughts and actions are harmonious with those of her husband, it would mean that they agree with each other in many respects. Since the liberated man has lost his self and selfishness he stops thinking and acting selfishly and regards all his thoughts and acts as those of Liṅga. Two of Cennabasavaṇṇa's Vacanas express correctly and clearly this aspect of such a man:

In my body is your body and in yours mine;
In my jīva is yours and in yours mine;
In my life-force is yours and in yours mine;
In my senses are yours and in yours mine;
. . . I am camphor and you are flame;
I united with you . . .[28]

If the mystic decides to consider his own body, life, breath, organs, senses and sense-objects as those of Paraśiva will he not experience the sense data? This question is answered by the mystic Cennabasavaṇṇa as follows.

Being at the door of my nose you are the enjoyer
Of the pleasure of all good smells;
Being at the door of my tongue you are the enjoyer
Of the pleasure of all good tastes;
Being at the door of my eyes you are the enjoyer
Of the pleasure of all good forms;
Being at the door of my skin you are the enjoyer
Of the pleasure of all good touches;
Being at the door of my ears you are the enjoyer
Of the pleasure of all good sounds;
Being at the door of my mind and being the
embodiment of knowing,
It is you who know through the five senses . . .
The reason is that I know that I am only a puppet in
your hands . . .[29]

The Śaraṇa thinks that like his body and sense organs which he considers as those of Paraśiva, his pleasurable experiences are regarded as those of Paraśiva. In other words, Paraśiva experiences pleasure through the body, senses and the inner instruments of the Śaraṇa. The Śaraṇa (mystic), who has thus

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become the medium through which Paraśiva enjoys, need not put in efforts to know that Paraśiva is enjoying through him. As he has completely erased the ego as a result of mystic experience, he has neither sense of 'I' nor the duality of 'I' and Paraśiva. He is only a living toy.

The Liṅgāyats, unlike Śaṅkara, hold that the world is real, though its existence is temporary. The Mukta (liberated person) identifies himself with the physical world and with all the individual souls, because they are parts of Liṅga. In fact, for him he, Liṅga, world and the individual souls are one and there is nothing like other than him. As Cennabasavaṇṇa says,

The great knower having realised
That he is the world and the world is he,
Finds nothing other than himself;
How can he ever know the other which does not exist?
Having realized his original blemishless consciousness
How can there be room
For talking of I and consciousness?
Can we compare his stance
In which there is neither I nor the other?
His essence is matchless bliss . . .[30]

When Allama says "He swallowed the world and the world swallowed him, the infinite swallowed the finite . . ."[31] he is wiping out the distinction between God, man and the world. His unitive experience makes tremendous change in his perception of himself, God and the world and his relation between himself and God and that between himself and the world. He, like rest of us eats, drinks, etc. but his attitude towards what he eats and eating is different from ours. He eats and experiences pleasures but without desire and infatuation for pleasure. Candimarasa compares this to a tongue to which fat does not stick, wind which is not defiled by dust[32]. He, as Cennabasavaṇṇa says, touches things but not as a man with selfish desires, but as Liṅga[33]. Whatever he enjoys he offers to Paraśiva, whatever he tastes is Prasāda[34]. His life is divine.

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As he identifies himself with Paraśiva, he does not have to worship Iṣṭa-liṅga or sing its praise. If by chance he does so, it is like worshipping himself and singing his own self[35]. Allama wonders, "If I should meditate, what should I meditate on, as the meditating mind has itself become Liṅga?"[36].

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CHAPTER EIGHT:

EIGHT AIDS OF FAITH (AṢṬĀVARAṆA)

Our ancients were more exposed to natural evils like floods, famines, pandemics, earthquakes, etc. and moral evils like wars, murders, loots, etc. than we are. Ancient Indian philosophers traced the causes of some evils to nature, some to gods and other supernatural agents and some to man himself. Man because of the free will does all kinds of acts which produce Karma-results in future or next births. In order to avoid the evil results of Karma and to acquire happiness he performs similar acts, as a result of which he is caught in a vicious circle of birth and death (Bhava). The ancient Indian philosophers proposed a way out: Mōkṣa, a permanent full-stop to all suffering. Gaining Mōkṣa involved Yōga, a long and strenuous spiritual practice. Indians have proposed many types of Yōga such as Jñāna-yōga, Bhakti-yōga, Pātañjala-yōga, Karma-yōga, Bauddha-yōga, Laya-yōga, etc. Liṅgāyatism founded by Basavaṇṇa proposes Liṅga-aṅga-yōga or Ṣaṭ-sthala-yōga.

As we have already seen, man (Aṅga) because of his inherent metaphysical amnesia (marevu) thinks wrongly that he is not Liṅga, but an individual separate from others, Liṅga and the world. Being constantly propelled by this ignorance he is inescapably caught in the cycle of birth and death. When he realises that enough is enough he meets a competent Guru who converts him to Liṅgāyatism and teaches the Liṅgāyat philosophy and religion which involves the doctrine of eight shields or coverings, namely, Guru, Liṅga, Jaṅgama, Prasāda, Pādōdaka, Vibhūti, Rudrākṣi and Mantra. These are called Āvararaṇas, for two reasons, one, that they act like shields

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against worldliness which is the cause of bondage and, two, that a Liṅgāyat must be within the bounds of these eight. If one goes out, i.e., if he does not practise them, he is not a Liṅgāyat, but a Bhavi, while if others come in, they are Liṅgāyats. These are only external instruments and an efficient teacher teaches how to use them effectively.

1. GURU

Ancient Indians have been holding the one who knows metaphysics in high esteem. They call him Guru and regard him as equal to God. In Liṅgāyatism he is called Guru-liṅga and, as Cennabasavaṇṇa says, "Hara (Śiva) descended to the earth as Guru in order to reveal his form"[1]. There are valid reasons for him to enjoy high respect.

a) Guru is one who teaches certain religious truths, God, soul Mōkṣa, creation, etc. which others do not know. b) He not merely teaches metaphysics and religious practices but also initiates people to Liṅgāyatism, by offering them Iṣṭa-liṅga. He performs certain other rituals also related to marriage, birth, christening, death, etc. c) His knowledge of metaphysics and religious practices is based, not on books or teachers, but on direct experience of Liṅga (Liṅgānubhava). This is a feat possible only for rare people and therefore, such people deserve high respect. So those who want to overcome existential suffering (Bhava-duḥkha) have to take the path he has trodden[2]. In fact, the Guru proper is one who, like a lamp that kindles another lamp, must produce another Guru.

Gurus are functionally classified into Dīkṣā-guru (one who initiates the novices and the new-born into Liṅgāyatism), Śikṣā-guru (one who gives instruction to his disciples in the doctrines and practices of Liṅgāyatism and Mōkṣa-guru (one who guides his disciples to Mōkṣa). Since Mōkṣa involves direct knowledge of the identity of Aṅga and Liṅga, the Guru who guides his disciple to direct knowledge (Jñāna) is also alternatively called Jñāna-guru[3]. One and the same Guru may perform all these functions, but since Mōkṣa-aspirants and the

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Jñāna-gurus are rare, Guru's function these days does not go beyond initiation and performance of rituals.

Characteristics of an Ideal Guru

Knowledge is an essential characteristic of a Guru. Knowledge in this case is neither knowledge like physics, chemistry, mathematics, etc. nor knowledge of Liṅgāyat metaphysics and ethics, but knowledge which redeems man from innate forgetfulness or ignorance (marevu) of oneself which is the cause of all kinds of suffering. Just as one who misses his way in a trackless forest needs guidance, so man who is caught in Bhava-cakra needs to be guided out[4]. He needs proper instruction in spiritual practice which only a competent teacher can give. One can imitate the worship, recitation of Mantras, Dāsōha, etc., but one cannot imitate spiritual practice[5]. Guru alone knows the proper way of practising it.

Guru has directly experienced his identity with Liṅga. This means one who wishes to see God but cannot see him, has to see a Guru who has had Liṅga-experience. One who wishes to attain Mōkṣa has to serve Guru[6]. Service to Guru is figuratively called 'offering body to God'. Service to Guru is not merely the fee for the spiritual guidance, but also an occasion to lose one's arrogance and selfishness and acquire humility, a requirement in spiritual practice. The disciple has to stay with him and follow his thought and actions.

Guru should remember that the aspirant (sādhaka) has suffered greatly in the series of births and deaths and wants liberation at any cost. Therefore, he should initiate him and guide him spiritually compassionately. Compassionate guidance is as much necessary as the strong will of the sādhaka to stick to spiritual practice.

All those who initiate may not be accomplished Yōgis. Their behaviour may not endear to the disciples. In such cases, suggests Cennabasavaṇṇa, the disciple should leave him in search of a better Guru[7]. Since Guru should preach morality and religion to his disciples it is necessary that he should adhere to what he preaches.

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Guru is consciousness personified

Basavaṇṇa, contrary to tradition, says that one becomes Guru, not by birth, but by achievement. Anyone who attains oneness with Liṅga in mystic experience is Guru. Since Liṅga is consciousness or knowledge (Arivu) the Guru who identifies himself with Liṅga is called Arivu ('Arivē guru') and is called 'Guru-liṅga'. One who has no Liṅga-experience does not deserve to be called Guru, i.e., he should not teach. If one defying this begins to teach, it would be like one, who without knowing swimming tries to save another from drowning[8]. Allama Prabhu would say that one who seeks God himself is Guru, disciple, God and the world[9]. We cannot imagine that Basavaṇṇa, who founded Liṅgāyatism, in which there was no room for caste discrimination, allowed birth in the Jaṅgama or Brahmin caste to be a qualification for becoming Guru. Cennabasavaṇṇa[10] asks, "What plight will it be of the human curs who bark, 'Brahmin is the Guru for all castes'?" So he concludes that initiation into Liṅgāyatism is more important than the caste of the Guru who initiates[11]. The old Śaiva or Kāḷāmukha doctrine that one becomes Guru by birth is replaced by the new doctrine that just as anyone can become a Liṅgāyat (Bhakta) so any Liṅgāyat by identifying with universal consciousness (Liṅga) can become Guru. When a Bhakta (disciple) after becoming a Guru returns to his Guru, the latter must not still think of himself as superior to his disciple[12].

Since Cennabasavaṇṇa, like Basavaṇṇa, insists on abolition of the practice of caste discrimination, he advises people not to be initiated by Śaiva Gurus. The reasons are many. As the Śaiva Guru is Brahmin, he does not instruct the initiate to give up the practise of caste discrimination; he does not advise the novice against polytheism and performance of sacrifices and rituals as religious duties; he sets Kailāsa and Sāyujya as the goal of religious life, rather than Sāmarasya in embodied life.

Basavaṇṇa had no hesitation in learning from all people including the untouchables. He accepts that he has poverty of devotion and therefore, he begged for devotion from Kakkayya,

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Cennayya, Dāsayya and others (the first two of these are untouchables). This implies at the same time that even untouchables can be Gurus[13].

Cennabasavaṇṇa condemns the practice of some Gurus, who, after giving initiation to the people of lower castes, refuse to dine in their houses, but accept as fee money, rice, ghee, etc.[14].

In the post-Basavaṇṇa period many unfortunate practices have continued to plague Liṅgāyat community. 1. The caste Jaṅgamas assert and other Liṅgāyats accept that Gurus must be from caste Jaṅgama; 2. most of the caste Jaṅgamas think that they are superior by caste and refuse to have marriage alliance with non-Jaṅgama Liṅgāyats. 3. They think that their duty is only performance of initiation and other rituals and have forgotten the duty prescribed by Basavaṇṇa. 4. Many of them are not aware of what mystic experience is, let alone being mystics.

2. Liṅga

The Sanskrit term 'Liṅga' has three meanings in Vacanas literature – Liṅga installed in temples or in shrines (sthāvara-liṅga), Iṣṭa-liṅga worn on the body and placed on palm while worshipping and the universal soul (God). The term, in fact, means emblem (kuruhu) or characteristic (lakṣaṇa). Thus, the Liṅga installed in temple is the emblem of Paraśiva abiding in Kailāsa and Iṣṭa-liṅga is the symbol of formless Paraśiva.

The Liṅga installed in temples and worshipped by the Kashmir Shaivas and Tamil Shaivas consists of both the parts – the lower part resembling the female generative organ and the upper part resembling the male generative organ. Below these two parts is the pedestal or basis, called Pīṭha. The sculpture symbolically expresses the principle that creation of the universe is jointly caused by male and female principles. Śiva who is symbolised as the stone Liṅga represents both these principles. Other sculptures, paintings and verbal descriptions depicting him as Ardha-nārīśvara (half-man, half-woman) mean the same. However, no worshipper gets the idea that Liṅga

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installed or worn on the body is a combination of feminine and masculine genders. He is aware that he is worshipping God and not his symbol.

While the mythologies describe the female principle as Śiva's wife, called variously Umā, Girijā, Pārvatī, etc., the Vacanakāras depersonalise it and prefer to call it Śakti, the material cause of the world. Similarly, Śiva is stripped of all his mythological associations and is called consciousness, the efficient cause of the world. Though in Liṅgāyatism the word 'Śiva' or 'Liṅga' is sometimes used as a synonym of consciousness it refers to an inseparable complex of efficient cause and material cause, of consciousness and Śakti.

When we speak of Liṅga as one of the eight aids of Liṅgāyatism, we mean Iṣṭa-liṅga, a black, thumb-sized, flat-based, oval shaped object, which contains a miniature stone Liṅga covered with certain chemicals.

The difference between Iṣṭa-liṅga and Sthāvara-liṅga is obvious. The latter is big, not covered with chemicals, installed in temples and worshipped by priests, whereas the former is small, offered only by Guru at the time of initiation, is worn on the body always and is worshipped by none other than the wearer. But there are significant philosophical differences behind them. Liṅgāyats believe that all, including man, animals, birds, are different forms of Śiva. While the Tamil Shaivas believe that Śiva resides in, but is different from, everybody's soul, the Liṅgāyats believe that every soul is itself Śiva. The Iṣṭa-liṅga one wears is the symbol of his soul which is Śiva himself.

The possible objection that as the installed Liṅga and the Iṣṭa-liṅga are the symbols of the same Śiva, Iṣṭa-liṅga cannot be special is based on the wrong presupposition that the object of worship for the different sects of Śaivism and Liṅgāyatism, namely, Śiva, is the same. But it is not the case. Śiva of the different sects of Śaivism is often conceived in mythological terms, as abiding in Kailāsa, riding a bull, holding a trident and a tabor, etc. But Śiva of Liṅgāyatism is free from all these

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mythological associations and is formless. Śiva is as wide as sky and has legs, hands, eyes, mouths everywhere. Moreover, for Liṅgāyats Śiva is not other than oneself. In the beginning of the spiritual journey the novice is asked to distinguish himself from Śiva, just in order to inculcate in him devotion (Bhakti). But once he becomes well versed in the aim and ways and means of Liṅgāyatism, he regards himself as Śiva and worships his own self in the form of Iṣṭa-liṅga in order to realise himself as Śiva. The followers of other sects of Śaivism cannot think of becoming Śiva. In short, Liṅgāyats are monists and the sects of Śaivism are dualists.

Initiation

Just as a Hindu boy becomes a Brahmin, Kṣatriya or Vaiśya by undergoing the Vēdic initiation ceremony called Upanayana-saṃskāra, so a non-Liṅgāyat becomes Liṅgāyat by undergoing the initiation ceremony called Liṅga-dīkṣā. However, when Bādarāyaṇa considers Upanayana-saṃskāra as a qualification for the study of Vēdas, which in turn is a qualification for Brahma-vidyā and Mōkṣa, he was by implication denying Śūdras and the untouchables the eligibility of Mōkṣa. This proscription was extendable to women. Liṅgāyats do not discriminate between castes or genders. While only boys of eight years undergo the Upanayana ceremony, anyone can become a Liṅgāyat irrespective of caste, age and gender. When a woman is carrying eight month old foetus Iṣṭa-liṅga is tied to her waist; that is the first initiation. When the child is born, and again, when it is eight year old, formal initiation is given. Non-Liṅgāyats can become Liṅgāyats at any time of their life.

Each formal initiation has three stages. The Guru extracts, as it were, consciousness from out of the head of the initiate and installs it in the Iṣṭa-liṅga he holds on his palm, just to convince him that Iṣṭa-liṅga is not a mere insentient object but an emblem of universal consciousness. This is called hasta-mastaka-saṃyōga (hand-head-contact). This is called Vēdhā-dīkṣā (penetration-ceremony) as the Guru is believed to penetrate the initiate's head to extract his consciousness

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therefrom. The second stage, called Mantra-dīkṣā, consists in the Guru whispering into the right ear of the initiate the Mantra, 'Namaḥśivāya'. In the third stage, called Kriyā-dīkṣā, he teaches the initiate the way of worshipping Iṣṭa-liṅga. As Śikṣā-guru he teaches later the philosophy and the purpose of the religious acts. One who wears an Iṣṭa-liṅga bought from market cannot become a Liṅgāyat because he is ignorant of the purpose and philosophy of Liṅgāyatism[15]. He may imitate a real Liṅgāyat in all respects, but he cannot achieve the required result, Liṅgānubhava (Liṅga-experience).

There are certain advantages in having Liṅga-initiation, which Basavaṇṇa thought, all must enjoy. When the Guru initiates by offering Iṣṭa-liṅga his intention is that the novice must wear it always on his body, worship it daily thrice (or at least twice), meditate on it and by means of that attain liberation. Though many people of low castes became Liṅgāyats in order to raise their social status, Basavaṇṇa's main intention was to eradicate caste discrimination, the cancer of Hinduism. Only the Brahmin priests had the privilege of worshipping gods. Their knowledge of Sanskrit Mantras and the method of performing sacrifices and worship in temples gave them the social status and economic advantages. Though the non-Brahmins knew how to worship and perform sacrifices they were prohibited from doing so. Basavaṇṇa rejected this and held that all those who become Liṅgāyats are high caste and are equal among themselves. He opened the doors of Liṅgāyatism to all castes including the untouchable Holeyas and the Mādigas and all women who were till then held as inferior.

Most of the followers of Basavaṇṇa were farmers, weavers, potters, farm labourers, cobblers, and the like. They gave up their faith in petty gods and began to worship Iṣṭa-liṅga offered by Guru. Now they need not go to temples or shrines and wait for the priest to come and perform the worship. The Śūdras were not allowed into the sanctorum and the untouchables were not allowed into any part of the temple. They had to watch the priest perform the worship from a distance. But their conversion to Liṅgāyatism not only prevented

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them from going to temples but also allowed them to worship Iṣṭa-liṅga at their own homes and at their convenient times. Basavaṇṇa assured them that one could worship God without the knowledge of Vēdic or other Sanskrit Mantras and in any way that one liked.

Basavaṇṇa and others insist that Liṅgāyats worship no God other than Śiva in the form of Iṣṭa-liṅga. Though this looks like fanaticism or intolerance towards other religions Basavaṇṇa gives valid reasons why other gods do not deserve to be worshipped. For him understanding the philosophical idea behind worship is more important than the name of the God one worships. If God is omnipresent, omnipotent, eternal, compassionate, superior to all beings, then the idea we get of gods who abide in banyan tree, on the roadside or in haunted places, or of gods who like watchmen keep the doors of devotees, of the waxen gods who melt or are deformed in the presence of fire, or the gods who vex people for petty food like porridge, is not the idea of God. In no way they evoke the feeling of devotion is us. They may evoke at worst disgust and at best fear.

Secondly, God is eternal, i.e., has no birth or death. The reason why Indra, Brahma and Kṛṣṇa are not God is that they have birth and death. It is ridiculous to think that God did not exist prior to his birth and does not exist after his death. Thirdly, God being omnipotent is able to ward off pain and suffering of his devotees. But Brahma who lost his fifth head was not able to re-create it; Rāma and Kṛṣṇa underwent many kinds of suffering in their Avatāras and could not ward them off. If our aim is to obtain divine grace which is a means to Mōkṣa or oneness with Liṅga, devotion to these gods does not help us. These are precisely the reasons why they rejected the worship of mythological Śiva in the form of installed Liṅga (Sthāvara-liṅga)[16].

Liṅgāyats are prohibited from visiting temples and pilgrimage places, for the simple reason that when we are ourselves God, it is ludicrous to seek God elsewhere[17].

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One may object that Basavaṇṇa's position, on the one hand, that God is one, but has many names[18], and, on the other, his denunciation of the worship of other gods is clearly contradictory. But a short analysis of his concept of God vis-a-vis other concepts reveals that the objection holds no water.

For Basavaṇṇa God is Sat-cit-ānanda, nitya (eternal) and paripūrṇa (all-pervasive), omnipotent creator, maintainer, destroyer of the world. When the worshipper thinks of Indra, for example, he is not identifying him with Viṣṇu, Brahma, Rudra or Vīrabhadra, nor with Paraśiva of Liṅgāyatism. Because Viṣṇu, Brahma, Paraśiva are not synonyms of Indra, whereas Guhēśvara, Kūḍala Saṅgamadēva, Cenna Mallikārjuna are synonyms of Liṅga. Taken in this sense, therefore, there is no contradiction.

Since Basavaṇṇa and his colleagues insisted on the worship of only Iṣṭa-liṅga, he could bring unity among his followers. But unfortunately, most of the present day Liṅgāyats, defying his wish, observe casteism very strictly and refuse to have marriage alliances with Liṅgāyats of other castes than their own.

Similarly, some people think that worship of Iṣṭa-liṅga is but image worship and therefore, Liṅgāyats should not denounce image worship done by others. Those who cannot distinguish between image and symbol make such objection. In reply it can be said that while an image resembles the original in some way, the symbol represents important attributes of the symbolised in a different way. For example, the sign of humps on the road resembles the real humps, whereas a bridge which is a symbol of relation does in no way resemble any relation. If we say that there is no bridge between India and China it means that there is no cordial relation between India and China. One who worships idol of Śiva or Viṣṇu thinks that it is the image of Śiva of Viṣṇu who has actually four hands, etc. Therefore, image worship necessarily involves some kind of anthropomorphism. If anthropomorphism is to be avoided image worship should be avoided. It is true, Basavaṇṇa says that Liṅga has eyes,

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hands, mouths, feet everywhere; but that is only a figurative way of speaking of God's omnipresence. It is, again, true that when Basavaṇṇa says[19] that Śaraṇa is one who can give form to formless Bayalu', or when Tōṇṭada Siddhaliṅga Śivayōgi says[20] that 'The holy Guru converted the formless Bayalu into a form and placed it on my palm' one is tempted to conclude that Iṣṭa-liṅga is but an image. But it is not an image. When the worshipper of image believes that God has four hands, etc., the worshipper of Iṣṭa-liṅga cannot think that Paraśiva is black, flat-based spherical, shining object. It is not an image, but a symbol, a symbol of formless Bayalu. Secondly, to attribute some form to God is necessarily to think wrongly that God, however big he is, is in space, which is bigger than him.

Moreover, image worships are normally performed by priests of higher castes in temples and others have only to watch it from a distance. Every Liṅgāyat, male or female, is enjoined to worship his/her Iṣṭa-liṅga. Basavaṇṇa says that when one is hungry one cannot ask others to eat on his behalf; similarly, when one wants to express his devotion he cannot ask a priest to worship[21].

History of Iṣṭa-liṅga Worship

Many scholars have tried, though in vain, to prove the prevalence of Vīraśaivism or Liṅgāyatism prior to Basavaṇṇa on the ground that Iṣṭa-liṅga worship was a pre-Basavaṇṇa practice. Let us examine the claim.

i. Some scholars, on the basis of findings in the Indus valley excavations have arrived at the conclusion that the miniature Liṅgas found there are Iṣṭa-liṅgas and that, therefore, Liṅgāyatism which involves Iṣṭa-liṅga worship is as old as Indus valley civilisation. This is obviously a hasty conclusion, because these Liṅgas are not covered with chemicals and therefore, are not Iṣṭa-liṅgas. Secondly, we do not know whether these were worn on the body as is prescribed in Liṅgāyatism. Thirdly, we do not know whether worshippers were Jaṅgamas or Pāśupatas who were wearing Liṅgas (see the next point below). Fourthly, even if for the sake of argument we accept that Iṣṭa-liṅga worhip

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was in vogue in those days, we are ignorant of whether the philosophical doctrines and religious practices associated with the miniature Liṅga worship are the same as those of Liṅgāyatism. Therefore, the claim that Liṅgāyatism prevailed during 3000 years ago is not more than a conjecture.

ii. Ānandagiri's *Śaṅkara-vijaya* makes a mention of the Liṅga-wearers who were defeated by Śaṅkara in a debate. This has prompted some scholars to conclude that Liṅgāyatism or Vīraśaivism prevailed before Śaṅkara (8th century A.D.). T.N.Mallappa in his scholarly book (*Vīraśaivadharmada Ugama mattu Pragati, Bengaluru*, 1969, p.17) quotes Ānandagiri's text which reads as follows:

Bhujadvaya liṅgāṅkadhara shaivā| phālē triśūladhāiṇaḥ raudrā||
bhujadvayē ḍamarudhāriṇaḥ ugrā| phālē liṅgacihnadhāriṇaḥ bhaṭṭā||
hṛdi triśūlam śirasi pāṣāṇaliṅgam ca dhāriṇaḥ jaṅgamā||
lalāṭē bhujadvayē hṛnnābhiṣu liṅgadhāriṇaḥā pāśupatāḥ||

[Śaivas wear the impression of Liṅga on their two shoulders; followers of Rudra wear the impression of trident on their foreheads; Ugras wear the mark of tabor on their shoulders; Bhaṭṭas wear the impression of Liṅga on their foreheads; but Jaṅgamas wear stone Liṅgas on their foreheads and heads, while Pāśupatas wear stone Liṅgas on their foreheads, arms, chests and navels.]

From this it follows that the Jaṅgamas and Pāśupatas were Liṅga-wearers but we do not have any evidence to decide which of the two were Liṅgāyats or Vīraśaivas. Nor do we know anything about their philosophical inclinations and religious practices.

iii. Sri T.N.Mallappa argues that the word 'Liṅgadhārī' appears in the *Pāśupata-sūtram* and, therefore, Vīraśaivism was prevalent much before Basavaṇṇa (Ibid. p.24). It is true that the word appears in the treatise, believed to be authored by

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Lakulīśa and commented on by Kauṇḍinya Ṛṣi of seventh century A.D. But, as the commentator says, the word does not mean 'one who wears a Liṅga', but one 'who has characteristics', as the word 'Liṅga' also means characteristic or mark. The context in which the word appears is as follows.

Sūtra 2. Bhasmaṇā triṣaṇaṃ snāyita
(bath thrice with ashes)

Sūtra 3. Bhasmani śayita
(lying down in the ashes)

Sūtra 4. Anusnānaṃ
(taking bath again)

Sūtra 5. Nirmālyaṃ
(taking off the garland of flowers from the Liṅga and wearing it)

Sūtra 6. Liṅgadhāri[22]

Kauṇḍinya, commenting on the Sūtra 6 clearly says that 'Liṅgadhārī' means 'one who has the above characteristics' and makes no mention of Liṅga-wearing in any part of his commentary. Moreover, there are three good reasons why we should reject the argument that the word must be interpreted as 'one who wears Liṅga'. 1. If in addition to these three above characteristics Liṅga-wearing were also a characteristic, the sixth sūtra should have read 'liṅga-dhāraṇaṃ' (wearing Liṅga), not 'liṅgadhārī' (one who wears Liṅga), for 'Liṅga-dhāraṇam' rhymes with 'nirmālyam', 'anusnānaṃ', etc. 2. If wearing Liṅga is a chief mark of Pāśupata sect, it should appear first on the list, i.e., before the second Sūtra, because only after Liṅga-initiation other rules follow. But it does not appear anywhere in the commentary. 3. More importantly, if wearing Liṅga were a characteristic of the Pāśupata faith, other rules related to the Liṅga wearing should have been mentioned. For example, in Liṅgāyatism there are rules like, 'Only Guru must initiate the novice', 'The Guru must not be a Brahmin', 'The Bhakta must wear the Iṣṭa-liṅga on his person always', 'One should worship Liṅga at least twice a day', 'One should not eat or drink unless he worships Liṅga',

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etc. But neither any of the Sūtras nor the commentary speaks of the rules related to the Liṅga-wearing. Therefore, Liṅga-wearing is not a characteristic, important or unimportant, of the Pāśupata sect.

The *Pāśupata-sūtram* prescribes certain rules to the followers of the Pāśupata faith. 1. The follower should not speak with Śūdras or women. 2. Guru should be Brahmin. 3. Guru should not initiate Śūdras or women. 4. The follower should behave like a mad man or like an epilepsy patient. 5. He should lie down in graveyard on the ashes and keep away from society and so on.

From this it follows that even if Liṅga wearing was a characteristic of the Pāśupata sect the above rules force us to conclude that Liṅgāyatism founded by Basavaṇṇa has nothing to do with Pāśupata system. But unfortunately, Mādhava who has included a chapter on the Pāśupata system in his *Sarva-darśana-saṅgraha* unreasonably interprets the term 'Liṅga-dhārī' as meaning 'one who wears Iṣṭa-liṅga'.

Haripada Chakravarti who has edited and translated into Englsih Kauṇḍinya's commentary on Nakulīśa's *Pāśupata-sūtram* thinks that Pāśupata sect was the earliest and the only form of Śaivism and it later gave birth to Kāpālika, Kāḷāmukha and similar sects which had minor differences among themselves[23]. Perhaps the later Pāśupatas began the practice of wearing Liṅga like Kāpālikas and Kāḷāmukhas and this is perhaps the reason why Mādhava interpreted the word 'Liṅgadhārī' as 'Liṅga-wearing'. But none of them is a Liṅgāyat because, says Kereya Padmarasa (1150-1200) in his *Dīkṣābōdhe* (Kannada), "we should not receive Prasāda from them because they think that they are different from Liṅga'[24].

iv. Iṣṭa-liṅga in the Ṛg Vēda

Some people argue that there is an indirect reference to Iṣṭa-liṅga in a Ṛg Vēda hymn and from this they infer the prevalence of Vīraśaivism during the Ṛg Vēdic period. This irrational argument has already been demolished (in Chapter Three under the title Anti-Basava Theories).

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3. JAṄGAMA

The concept of Jaṅgama plays an important role in Liṅgāyatism. The word has been used and abused, for it has many meanings and Basavaṇṇa has himself used it in more than one sense. The word can be best understood along with its relative term 'sthāvara' (static). The term 'sthāvara' normally applies to 'sthāvara-liṅga' (installed Liṅga). But in the present context it applies to Liṅga (God) who is sthāvara (immovable), as he is everywhere. While God (the universal consciousness) is omnipresent and immovable, the same consciousness that is present in the living beings moves (Jaṅgama) when the living beings move. As the two are the same Basavaṇṇa rightly proclaims Sthāvara (God) and Jaṅgama (moving beings) are identical[25]. He calls man Jaṅgama or Jaṅgama-liṅga and refers to him as 'walking Liṅga', 'speaking Liṅga', 'Liṅga with mouth'[26]. As Siddharāma would say "It is called Jaṅgama because it is movable and Liṅga because it is immovable; there is not an iota of difference'[27]. Some scholars have mischievously interpreted that for Basavaṇṇa Liṅga installed in temples and Iṣṭa-liṅga which moves when its wearer moves are one and the same and that he worshipped installed Liṅga also. But contrary to this misinterpretation Basavaṇṇa vehemently condemned the worship of all images other than one's own Iṣṭa-liṅga. Moreover, when he said that the installed Liṅga is transient, he held implicitly that the Iṣṭa-liṅga is also transient.

Basavaṇṇa's conviction of the identity of God and man is not the result of philosophical deliberation, but the result of mystic experience in which he was directly aware of himself as infinite consciousness (Śiva or Liṅga). As a result, he began to see himself in every being and every being in himself. This is same as saying that he experienced the same soul in all beings or that he was convinced that the same Śiva is breathing, thinking and acting in all beings.

Those who know the existence of the same universal soul in all beings by philosophical deliberation or from books or teachers may or may not be compassionate to all living beings. If one becomes compassionate because of philosophical

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learning, then all students of Advaita should have been compassionate. But that is not the case. In fact, the Vacanakāras deride those who talk Advaita without being compassionate. They call them Vāgadvaitins (Advaitins only in speech). Compassion is the feeling that one develops as a result of mystic experience. As Haḍapada Appaṇṇa says, compassion is the test of mystic experience[27a].

One must regard his compassionate acts as religious vows. That is, they are not optional but compulsory acts, like worship of Iṣṭa-liṅga, chanting of Mantra, etc. That is what Basavaṇṇa means when he says that compassion is the root of religion[27b].

If Liṅga and Jaṅgama are identical, says Basavaṇṇa, our religious life should flow in two identical ways: just as we appease God by worshipping Iṣṭa-liṅga, which is his one symbol, we can appease Jaṅgama by feeding him, which is his another symbol. These two ways of devotion are not separate, but related: we cannot practise one without the other. 'If you worship Liṅga, you must fear Jaṅgama'[28]. One may acquire deep knowledge of Advaita, Dvaita, etc. but if one is indifferent to Jaṅgama even after knowing that it is Śiva, his scholarship loses its value[29]. Most of us are ready, to offer variety of rich food to stone images of God, but refuse to offer a morsel of food to a hungry Jaṅgama[30]. Many a time Basavaṇṇa asserts emphatically that real religion (devotion) consists in compassionate act[31] and if we forget for a while to pour water on the Iṣṭa-liṅga it does not dry up and if we pour water on it it does not become soft and therefore, worship has little value[32]. Indifference to Jaṅgama is a sign of ignorance of religion. If instead we feed a Jaṅgama, with the satisfaction of the Jaṅgama the immovable God is pleased[33]. Thus Basavaṇṇa has condemned the old and popular idea of religion as elaborate worship, loud recitation of Mantras, prayers, meditation, offering rich food, etc. and has given a new definition of religion[34]. During and prior to his times people constructed temples or gave donations for maintaining them. Basavaṇṇa said that real devotion consists, not in constructing temples or

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maintaining them, but in becoming God and making one's own body a veritable temple[35]. We are not sure whether our offer is acceptable to God, but we surely know that the Jaṅgamas are pleased by the food we offer[36]. Basavaṇṇa's love for Jaṅgama was so great and indomitable that he had arranged daily Dāsōha for Jaṅgamas.

In another sense the word Jaṅgama means one who has identified himself with Liṅga. Such a one moves about and is called Liṅga-Jaṅgama.

Basavaṇṇa uses the word 'Jaṅgama' in the sense of caste Jaṅgamas also. Some of his associates were Śaiva Jaṅgamas and people believed them to be incarnations of Śiva. They had no profession and depended on begging. But some of them misused the gullibility of people and demanded from them all earthly things they wanted. They were unimaginably unethical. One of them, for example, demanded from Siriyāḷa and Ceṅgaḷe food made of flesh of their only son; another demanded from Sindhu Ballāḷa his wife. These two are recorded in Vacanas and other forms of Śaiva literature. But we do not know unrecorded number of such unethical demands.

These Jaṅgamas, like Brahmins, claimed superiority by birth. Basavaṇṇa who hated all kinds of discrimination could not have tolerated such claims. He said that boasting of a Jaṅgama of his high caste is foolishness[37]. Cennabasavaṇṇa has condemned such claims in strong words. Jaṅgamas who claim superiority are like dogs and pigs who depend on others for food; they do not deserve to be called Jaṅgamas[38]. Both Allama Prabhu[39] and Cennabasavaṇṇa[40] say that Basavaṇṇa descended to the earth in the form of a Jaṅgama to erase the defects of the concept of Jaṅgama. Basavaṇṇa insisted that even Jaṅgama should not beg and should perform a Kāyaka (profession). He allotted to him two duties, the Kāyaka of a social mentor and the Kāyaka of guiding the seekers to Mōkṣa. His function should be to bring to the moral and religious track those Liṅgāyats who have gone off the track. He compares him to a teacher, who holding a stick in one hand offers a cup

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of milk of morality held in the other[41]. Jaṅgamas were rightly so called because they moved from place to place in order to educate people in morality and religion of Liṅgāyatism. This function also took other forms of which the chief are as follows. 1. Bell-duty (Ghaṇṭēya kāyaka): A Jaṅgama with a ringing bell in his hand would roam the village streets to wake up people so that they would go to their profession. 2. Flour-duty (Hiṭṭina kāyaka): He would re-appear soon after the sunrise and remind people who were still in bed. As a reward he would get a fistful of flour. 3. Rotti-duty (Roṭṭiya Kāyaka). 3. He would again at around 9 a.m. visit and remind lazy people of their duty and as a reward get one or two Roṭṭis (breads). 4. Embrace-duty (Tekkeya Kāyaka): When the Jaṅgama learns about the evil habits of a person he would, as soon as the door opens, enter his house and embrace a pillar therein. He would not loosen his grip unless the person repents and promises to give up the evil habit. As no member in the house can eat unless the Jaṅgama is fed the wicked man promises to give up his evil habit. 5. Nailed-footwear-duty (Muḷḷāvigeya Kāyaka): The Jaṅgama would stand on a sharp-nailed footwear where four roads meet and would go on praying to God and the Śaraṇas like Basavaṇṇa, etc. to mend the ways of the person who is given to bad habits. Fearing that his name would be heard by others and unable to withstand the plight of the Jaṅgama, the evil person repents and promises the Jaṅgama that he would mend his ways. 6. Weapon-duty (Śastrada Kāyaka): When the Jaṅgama decides to free a certain individual of his evil tendency he would take the extreme step of beating himself in the public with a sharp weapon till he bleeds. This has a very strong impact on both the wicked man and onlookers. The onlookers would pressurise the wicked man to give up his evil tendency. Displeasing or hurting a Jaṅgama is the cruellest moral evil which a Liṅgāyat should not do. Basavaṇṇa was so great that he was ready to take all measures including the harmful ones to construct a society free from all evils.

Basavaṇṇa suggested that those who are free from Bhava should guide others to liberation. Guru's teaching of ways and

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means of liberation may not cure the disease called Bhava-rōga (worldly existence), it needs surgeon (śastra-vaidya) called Jaṅgama[42]. Such a Jaṅgama must not expect the seekers to come to him, but must go in search of them. In fact, some think that a Jaṅgama must have self-experience[43] and must move about for the welfare of the world[44]. Allama Prabhu, for example, brought Siddharāma, a famous Śiva-devotee, from Sonnalige to Kalyāṇa with the sole intention that he should under the careful guidance of Basavaṇṇa and others learn the proper ways and proper means of liberation[45]. The authors of four versions of *Śūnya-sampādane* mention many more such examples.

Basavaṇṇa insisted that as Jaṅgamas have a highly responsible and sublime duty, they should maintain high moral and spiritual character. They were to wear ochre robe or loin cloth, shave their heads, own no property and move about preaching Liṅgāyatism. But when many failed to fulfil these conditions, people asked, "Are all those who without realising the truth wear ochre robe and loin cloth and get their heads shaven Jaṅgamas?"[46]. As they had no regular profession, they depended on begging which the Śaraṇas condmned[47]. A woman Vacana writer sarcastically declares that the Jaṅgamas wear loin clothes and get their heads shaven in order to appear like Jaṅgamas so that they get alms easily[48].

4. PRASĀDA

Liṅgāyats consider that for a serious follower of Liṅgāyatism Prasāda is as important as Guru, Liṅga and Jaṅgama. The statements of both Allama Prabhu[49] and Cennabasavaṇṇa[50] that Basavaṇṇa descended to the earth to erase the defects of the concept of Prasāda show the importance of Prasāda. When the caste Jaṅgamas who have been functioning as Gurus are invited during special occasions like wedding ceremony, christening ceremony, etc. to perform the related rites they are offered specially prepared food which they offer to their Iṣṭa-liṅga, take out a morsel and eat and return the rest to the host. What is offered to Liṅga is technically called padārtha (thing) and after the offer it is called Prasāda. But devotees, in the absence of a

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Guru or Jaṅgama, can offer their food, including their daily, ordinary food, to their Iṣṭa-liṅga and convert it to Prasāda. It is believed that padārtha is not holy before it was offered and after the offering it becomes Prasāda, holy food. It is further believed that the devotee who consumes Prasāda becomes holy. Therefore, there is a rule in Liṅgāyatism that no devotee should eat food or drink water without offering it to Liṅga or Jaṅgama (the visible Liṅga). Liṅga will cast into a pond full of worms one who defies this[51]. According to them only Bhavis (non-Liṅgāyats) eat non-Prasāda, which is equal to poison.

The Liṅgāyat concept of Prasāda is different from the traditional Hindu (Vēdic) concept. 1. The Vēdic people thought only the priests should sacrifice animals to gods. Similarly, only the priest has the privilege of worshipping idols in the temples and distributing Prasāda among the devotees. Others have no right to worship or offer food to God and convert it to Prasāda and distribute it among the devotees. Any Liṅgāyat can convert his food into Prasāda and distribute it among his fellow beings. 2. Normally, the food that is distributed by the Hindus as Prasāda is special, delicious food, whereas the Liṅgāyats can offer and convert their daily ordinary food as well to Prasāda. It is said that the king Cōḷa was waiting for Śiva with variety of delicious food; but Śiva first visited Cennayya, a cobbler, a great Śiva-devotee, who offered him the poor man's food, porridge (*ambali*). Śiva drank it to his heart's content, leaving no room in his stomach for Cōḷa's food. So when he came to Cōḷa he did not touch any of his offer. Here the question whether Śiva, like humans, has a small stomach or whether he is satisfied by man-made food is irrelevant. What is relevant is that even a cobbler can satisfy God and even lowly food can be offered to him, but with deep and selfless devotion. 3. To get Prasāda one need not go to temple; one can convert his orinary food into Prasāda at home.

The more important difference is this, that according to Liṅgāyatism, there is nothing in the world that is not Liṅga's Prasāda. The devotee should know that consumption of Prasāda is a necessary part of devotion. Therefore, he should not reject

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anything as more salty or more pungent, etc.; nor should he hanker for it because it is tasty or more nutritious. (Also see Mindful Devotion of Prasādi below).

5. PĀDŌDAKA

The word Pādōdaka etymologically means water (udaka) that has washed the feet (pāda) of Guru or Jaṅgama and is collected in a bowl or plate. Normally the disciple who invites Guru or Jaṅgama should wash the feet placing them in a bowl or plate and worship according to the usual rules. Many Liṅgāyats who consider Pādōdaka as holy, sip it, use it for cooking, sprinkling on their heads and walls of their house, etc. But how the Pādōdaka helps the seeker to develop spiritually is not known from the Kannada or Sanskrit treatises. Perhaps the following may be treated as justification. If Guru or Jaṅgama is one who has identified himself with Śiva, the water that touches all his parts is believed to become holy. The devotee who drinks it loses his arrogance. This means that only Pādōdaka of those who are liberated, not all Gurus or Jaṅgamas, is eligible to be called holy. Kāḍa Siddhēśvara, a post-Basava Vacanakāra, says that those who sip the water that washes the feet of foolish and wretched Jaṅgamas who love all kinds of sensual pleasure deserve to get their noses cut[52]. Similarly, Cennabasavaṇṇa says that one who moves from house to house to beg, blows trumpets and conchs, blames the Bhaktas and Gaṇas, deals in food grains, cloths, silver and gold, shows keen interest in other women, other's property, lives in the houses of prostitutes and concubines, is not a Guru or Jaṅgama. From such a person we should not receive Prasāda or Pādōdaka[53]. Mūrusāvira Mukti Muni warns that receiving Prasāda or Pādōdaka from non-Liṅgāyats, like Brahmins, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas, Śūdras, Pāśupatas, Kāḷāmukhas is non-Liṅgāyat discipline[54].

Strangely, there is a rule that one should wash Iṣṭa-liṅga with Pādōdaka[55]. To justify this Cennabasavaṇṇa offers the following argument. If a stone becomes Liṅga by consecration can a man who has inborn Śiva-hood not become a Guru by

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spiritual training? It is right to say that the Pādōdaka of a worthless man is not fit for washing the Liṅga which is consecrated. But since Guru, Liṅga and Jaṅgama are the forms of the same Śiva, why should we not use the Pādōdaka of a Guru or Jaṅgama for washing Liṅga?[56].

The Śaraṇas have prescribed the qualification of those who deserve Pādōdaka. Those who live naturally (like animals) and those who are subject to bondage do not deserve Pādōdaka[57].

Though the *Siddhānta-śikhāmaṇi* speaks of Pādōdaka of three kinds, HH. Sri. Mallikarjuna Shivayogi who has commented on it has interpreted the concept in a way that has no reference to holy water. According to him, Dīkṣā-pādōdaka is Śravaṇa (listening to the teaching of Guru); as a result of this, the disciple gets knowledge that he is Śiva and the desire to get liberation from bondage; the nectar of bliss of that knowledge is called Pādōdaka. He interprets the term 'Dīkṣā-pādōdaka' which consists of three words, dīkṣā, pāda and udaka as meaning the cordial relation (dīkṣā) between Guru (pāda) who is the visible form of Śiva and the disciple (udaka)[58]. Similarly, his interpretation of Śikśā-pādōdaka and jñāna-pādōdaka has no reference to holy water[59]. The absence of Vacanas referring to Pādōdaka in Ṣaṭ-sthala-vacanas of Basavaṇṇa, Cennabasavaṇṇa and Allama Prabhu and their abundant presence in 'Additional Vacanas' compel us to suspect whether the practice of Pādōdaka was prevalent among the 12th century Liṅgāyats. Our suspicion is strengthened by the practice among many of the south Karnataka Liṅgāyats who neither sip Pādōdaka nor use it for washing Liṅga, but only sprinkle it on the walls of their houses.

6. VIBHŪTI

Applying three stripes of sacred ash (Vibhūti) to different parts of body, specially forehead, throat, shoulders, forearms, etc. has been a mark of all sects of Śaivism since a long time. Also called Bhasma (ashes) it was applied by the

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Pāśupatas to all parts of body. In fact, they were enjoined to lie down in the graveyard, especially in the ashes of corpses, throughout the night. But the Liṅgāyats are enjoined to rub their three fingers against the hardened lump of Vibūti and put the mark on forehead, throat, etc. As the ashes are sacred the wearer is believed to become sanctified. Basavaṇṇa believes that sin is washed off if Vibhūti is applied to forehead[60]. Tōṇṭada Siddhaliṅga Śivayōgi thinks that "When Vibhūti is applied to all parts, all sins and bondage are dispelled"[61].

Actually applying three stripes of Vibhūti is only a symbolic act, representing a philosophical doctrine. This is suggestively revealed in one of the Vacanas of Tōṇṭada Siddhaliṅga Śivayōgi[62]. Burning is believed to be a purifying act and what remains, the ash, is pure. Here what are burnt are Tripura (threefold body), threefold impurity, threefold Karma, etc. Tripura is a mythological town, ruled by an evil demon, which was burnt down by the raging fire emanating from the third eye of Śiva. But while this is a mythological expression, the philosophical doctrine behind it is this, that man's soul is covered by three-fold body (Tripura or three puras), gross (sthūla), subtle (sūkṣma) and causal (kāraṇa). The gross body is impure because it is subject to debility, disease, old age and death; the subtle body is impure because it is subject to lust, anger, greed, infatuation, arrogance and hatred and the causal body is impure because of the seeds of Karma which are the causes of bondage. In these three bodies lies (śaya) the soul (puruṣa or ātman) which is subject to the cycle of birth and death. Man should burn these three bodies (Tripura) by means of the fire of knowledge and what remains is pure ash. Whenever man applies Vibhūti he should take oath that he will burn down his Tripura to ashes. Similarly, he should promise to himself that he will burn down to ashes the three impurities (āṇava, kārmika and māyīya), the three Karmas (sañcita, prārabdha and āgāmi), three guṇas, etc. We should emulate the mythological Śiva who is covered with ashes. Merely applying Vibhūti to different parts of the body without this oath is a futile, meaningless exercise.

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7. RUDRĀKṢI

All the sects of Śaivism, including Liṅgāyatism, regard wearing Rudākṣi seeds, either as a garland or singly as an act of faith. The mythological reason why we should wear it is this: Śiva (also called Rudra) has the sun and the moon as his eyes and has a third eye in the forehead. When he stared with anger with his third eye to emit fire to kill the demon called Tripurāsura, a few tears fell down on the ground and became seeds which grew as Rudākṣi trees. Since then they are so called because they are seeds born of Rudra's eyes (akṣis).

The mythological language expresses a philosophical message which scholars have ignored to note. The philosophical message is that we should also, like Rudra (Śiva), learn to look at our threefold body and the world unselfishly. As a result, we are able to sanctify ourselves like Rudra (Śiva) and our body and the world will not be an impediment to spiritual progress.

8. MANTRA

Even if a devotee is very devout he cannot devote all his time for the worship of Iṣṭa- liṅga, because he is forced to be engaged in bathing, eating, discharging duty, etc. Nor is he required to be engaged in the worship always. Being a devout Liṅgāyat he can always remember Liṅga by uttering a Mantra which consists of five syllables, namely, Śi, vā, ya, na and maḥ (or Na maḥ śi vā and ya), which means "I bow to Śiva". Sometimes it is preceded by another syllable 'ōṃ'. Also called Praṇava it is more advantageous than the Vēdic and other Mantras, which are long and complex. Since Basavaṇṇa's followers were farmers, weavers, potters, cobblers and the like who were ignorant of Sanskrit and who had no time for elaborate worship accompanied by long Mantras, this short but efficacious Mantra was prescribed to them. Yet Basavaṇṇa assured them that

The Vēdas stopped because they could not transcend the Mantra, 'ōṃ namaḥśivāya';
The Śāstras stopped because they could not transcend the Mantra, 'ōṃ namaḥśivāya';

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Logic stopped because it could not transcend the Mantra, 'ōṃ namaḥśivāya'[63].

His assurance that the Mantra is greater than the Vēdas, Śāstras and Tarka (Logic) is supported by the promise that incantation of this Mantra is enough. He goes a step further and says that even utterance of this Mantra is not necessary if one can utter the names of Liṅga such as Śiva, Hara, Śaṅkara, etc. because if Mantra is a way of remembering God, uttering any of these names is as effective as uttering Mantra[63a].

It should be noted that just as Iṣṭa-liṅga is a symbol of the formless of Paraśiva, so is the Mantra. The difference is that while one is visible, the other is audible. The Guru, in fact, says at the time of initiation that the Mantra, like Iṣṭa-liṅga, is formless God[64], because these syllables are the sources of five Śaktis, which are the building blocks of the universe. He whispers these syllables into the ears of the initiate and these syllables entering him change his whole personality into a spiritual body[65]. While Cennabasavaṇṇa calls the converted body 'Mantra-piṇḍa'[66], Tōṇṭada Siddhaliṅga Śivayōgi calls it 'Jñāna-kāya' (body full of consciousness). When the devotee regards his own breath as Mantra, it means his body is spiritually converted[67].

Tōṇṭada Siddhaliṅga Śivayōgi recognises three ways of chanting Mantra – remembering, whispering and loudly uttering[68]. Continuously chanting is one of the ways to continuously remember God so that the final goal is achieved.

9. SIGNIFICANCE OF IṢṬA-LIṄGA WORSHIP

Once invested with Iṣṭa-liṅga the Liṅgāyat devotee is enjoined to worship it daily thrice or twice or at least once[69]. The Āgamas prescribe eight-fold worship and sixteen-fold worship of the Liṅga installed in temples. Though the Liṅgāyat devotee is expected to offer similar worship to Iṣṭa-liṅga he cannot do so always – maybe because of want of time or want of required articles. Therefore, his day-to-day worship is restricted to short and simple acts, requiring minimum number

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of articles. Thus he pours water on the Iṣṭa-liṅga, wipes it dry with a special cloth reserved for it, applies Vibhūti (and sandal paste) to it, places flowers (and leaves) on it, circumambulates incense sticks, lighted lamp and burning camphor, rings the bell, offers milk or fruit or some food and water. After these acts, he should meditate on Iṣṭa-liṅga for a while.

What is the meaning of these acts? Why should we circumambulate burning camphor and incense sticks, apply Vibhūti (sandal paste), or offer food? Does Śiva like to eat them? Many people think (wrongly) that Śiva loves Bilva leaves, red flowers, etc. But how do we know Śiva loves them? Or, are these acts meaningless? Most of the worshippers do not ask these questions. They perform them simply because they are instructed to do so by their Gurus or parents. But neither the Gurus nor the parents know the meaning or purpose of these acts. At best they may answer that the Āgamas have prescribed these acts. If we do not know the meaning of these acts, their performance is nothing more than mechanical and, therefore, fruitless.

These acts reflect some philosophical significance which we, our parents, forefathers and the Gurus have forgotten over the centuries. These acts were meaningful once upon a time; only we are ignorant of their meaning now. The philosophical significance seems to be as follows.

According to Liṅgāyatism, all that is is the self-transformation of Liṅga (Śiva). Liṅga has transformed himself into mountains and plain lands, rivers and oceans, stars and planets, humans and animals, plants and trees, creepers and bushes. He can choose to transform himself into the world and also choose not to transform himself into the world[70]. Therefore, we can safely conclude that there is nothing in the world which he is not.

The Vacanakāras regard all kinds of food as Prasāda of Liṅga. Jēḍara Dāsimayya regards land, crops, bullocks, seeds, wind, etc. as Liṅga's gifts[71], while Basavaṇṇa regards the whole body of a real Liṅgāyat Bhakta is Prasāda-kāya (Prasāda-

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personality). Cennabasavaṇṇa who has written more Vacanas on Prasāda than any other Vacanakāra regards not only food but all things that come within the orbit of human experience as gifts or Prasāda of Liṅga. For him the five material elements of which things and bodies are made are Prasāda of Liṅga; the senses, the motor organs and the inner instruments (mind, intellect, will and ego) are all Prasāda of Liṅga (see 'Mindful Devotion of Prasādi', below). Once we wilfully accept all these as Prasāda we cannot claim that this or that is ours, for all is God's gift or God's property and, we obviously lose any right to ownership of our own limbs, let alone external things.

If we are convinced that all things are gifts of God, it is imperative that we be grateful to him for creating us and placing the whole world before us. The best way for real religious people to be grateful to the creator is to repay the debt in the form of devotion (bhakti). There are two ways of repaying the debt. Worship is one way. When we pour water on Iṣṭa-liṅga or offer food to it we are repaying the water element and taste which is its attribute; when we offer flower or sandal paste or perfume of the incense sticks, we are returning the earth element and its attribute smell; when we ring bell we are repaying the sky element whose attribute is sound; when we circumambulate lighted lamp or camphor we are repaying form, the attribute of fire element. In the sixteen-fold worship fanning – offering wind – is included.

But these are all only symbolic acts and not real way of repaying the debt. As Allama Prabhu says, we bring something external (flower, food, etc.) and we do some external acts, visible, audible and sometimes pompous, which we call pūja (worship). We have not offered anything that belongs to us. We do these acts because it is easy to perform them and we are not losing anything worthy that belongs to us. The really difficult part is sacrificing our desire or our selfishness. Therefore, this is not real way of returning the debt. Our debt-repaying act must begin with these symbolic acts, though it must not stop at that.

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The real way of debt-repaying begins with the conviction that body, senses, motor organs, inner instruments and the objects of senses are not mine, but Liṅga's. One who is strongly convinced of that decides to surrender his all - his body, senses, and inner instruments, including the I-sense, to God. Once he offers his I-sense (ahaṃ-bhāva) to God he has offered everything, because to sacrifice I-sense is to offer all selfish desires. One who has no selfish desires is a pure soul and a pure soul is a liberated soul. Such a person's personality appears to be physical, but in the spiritual sense, it is not physical but Prasāda-kāya, body made of Prasāda or holy body. It is a house, not occupied by worldly soul, but one occupied by Liṅga. Liṅgāyats do not believe in Kailāsa, the abode of mythological Śiva, but, says Basavaṇṇa, one should make one's body the abode of Śiva. Prasāda-kāya is verily Kailāsa. One should do this while he is still alive and this state of his is called Jīvanmukti (embodied liberation). One who makes his body Śiva's abode wipes out automatically the distinction between himself and Liṅga.

Cennabasavaṇṇa considers Prasāda as a debt; but returning it does not mean offering one's organs to Liṅga. In Harihara's *Ragaḷes* and Bhīma Kavi's *Basava-purāṇa* stories abound of Śiva-devotee who offer to Śiva their eyes, legs, hands, intestines, and, finally, their heads, as a mark of intense devotion. These poets extol their devotion in superlative words. But one fails to understand how this kind of bloody offer is devotion and how Śiva appreciates these acts of devotion. Basavaṇṇa and Cennabasavaṇṇa abhor such repulsive practices and suggest that devotees must regard their organs, etc. as those of Liṅga as a mark of repayment of debt. Cennabasavaṇṇa says,

O Śiva, I say Hail, O hail!
I am not Thy Śaraṇa
Who taking Thy loan, enter Thy city!
By rendering earth towards earth's loan,
By rendering water for water's loan,
By rendering fire for loan of fire,
By rendering air for loan of air,

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By rendering sky for loan of sky,
And realizing he had nothing to repay
To anyone else, absorbed himself
In Lord Kūḍala Cennasaṅgama[72].

We should note that the Tamil Śaiva devotees whom these poets are extolling believed that living in Kailāsa is the highest goal of spiritual life and that what they did was sacrifice of the highest kind. But Basavaṇṇa and his followers taught that being liberated embodied and regarding one's all as those of Liṅga is the highest goal. In fact, the liberated person regards himself as the body of Śiva. This is technically called 'Liṅga-Aṅga-sāmarasya', unitive life of the devotee. He has realised that his body, senses, etc. as well as his thoughts and actions are all those of Śiva.

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CHAPTER NINE:

DOCTRINE OF ṢAṬ-STHALA

The Sanskrit word 'Sthala' means 'Bayalu' in Kannada and 'space' in English. 'Ṣaṭ' means 'six'. The hyphenated term means six forms of Liṅga. In the pre-creation state Liṅga was alone and was called 'Śūnya', 'Bayalu', 'Cid-bayalu' (consciousness-space) or 'Sthala'. In Bayalu there existed nothing. Therefore, Bayalu was not aware of anything. Nor was it aware of itself. When there was primordial spur in Śakti, which was so far latent in it, Bayalu became Śiva-śakti complex (Śiva-śakti-sampuṭa). Also called Niṣkala Liṅga (Impartite Liṅga), the complex divided itself into Aṅga-sthala and Liṅga-sthala. Aṅga-sthala or Jīvātama is individual soul associated with body, senses, motor organs and inner instruments, while Liṅga-sthala is God who creates, maintains and destroys the universe, punishes the wicked and graces the virtuous. Aṅga is the worshipper and Liṅga the worshipped. While Aṅga is limited Liṅga, his body, senses, cognitive instruments are products of Śakti. Just as Aṅga and Liṅga are essentially one, so are Liṅga and Śakti. But man, under the influence of marevu (forgetfulness) has forgotten his real nature as Liṅga (Śiva) and thinks wrongly that he is an individual distinct from others and Liṅga. As a result, he is caught in Saṃsāra. If by chance he realises his predicament and aims at re-union with Liṅga he has to convert his Śaktis (worldly forces) to Bhaktis (spiritual forces). As a result he becomes Bhakta. The word 'Bhakta' actually means in Liṅgāyatism not only Liṅgāyat, the opposite of Bhavi (non-Liṅgāyat), but also an Aṅga whose personality is made, not of worldly forces, but of Bhaktis, forces which

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lead him to union with Liṅga. Cennabasavaṇṇa says, 'Body touched by Liṅga must become Liṅga-devotee; eye, . . . ear, . . . nose, . . . tongue, . . . self . . . touched by Liṅga should become Liṅga-devotees'[1].

The devotee is already equipped with eight aids. But these are instruments and with proper use of them he should convert the worldly forces into Bhaktis. Liṅgāyatism speaks of six stages of seeker, technically called (in ascending order), Bhakta, Mahēśa, Prasādi, Prāṇaliṅgi, Śaraṇa and Aikya. The Bhaktis which help him in his spiritual endeavour are called, respectively, Viśvāsa, Niṣṭhā, Avadhāna, Anubhāva, Ānanda and Samarasa. Just as Bhakta, Mahēśa, etc. are names of one and the same seeker, so Viśvāsa, Niṣṭhā, etc. are the names of one and the same Bhakti. These are six ways of losing the sense of individuality (I-sense) and sense of separateness and uniting indistinguishably with Liṅga. Therefore, Ṣaṭ-sthala Yōga is Yōga of six parts. It is also called Śiva-yōga. But since the word 'Śiva-yōga' is used by Kashmir Shaivas and Tamil Shaivas to refer to their Yōga which is different from the Liṅgāyat spiritual programme let us prefer the term Ṣaṭ-sthala-yōga.

Ṣaṭ-sthala-yōga presupposes the doctrine that Liṅga resides in man and man can train himself spiritually to experience Liṅga in six places of his body, the five points in spine and the sixth in between the eyebrows. The locations are called cakras (plexes) and Liṅga is believed to reside in each. Thus in the lowest cakra, Ādhāra (Mūlādhāra) resides Ācāra-liṅga, in the cakra above it, called Svādhiṣṭhāna, resides Guru-liṅga, in the Maṇipūraka-cakra Śiva-liṅga, in the Anāhata-cakra resides Jaṅgama-liṅga, in the Viśuddhi-cakra resides Prasāda-liṅga and in the Ājñā-cakra resides Mahāliṅga. These are six (ṣaṭ) Liṅga-sthalas. Sometimes reference is also made to Śūnya-liṅga residing in the Sahasrāra-padma at the top of the brain, believed to be source of nectar (amṛta) sipping which regularly is the aim of the seeker. The seeker should realise each Liṅga gradually and in the ascending order. One who so realises it is called Bhakta, Mahēśa, Prasādi, Prāṇa-liṅgi, Śaraṇa and Aikya.

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The Vacanakāras believe that each cakra is dominated and vitiated by an element - Ādhāra by the earth element, Svādhiṣṭhāna by water element, Maṇipūraka by fire element, Anāhata by air element and Viśuddhi by sky element. The seeker should purify these elements gradually in the ascending order so that they become Bhaktis which help the seeker to unite with Liṅga in each stage. To purify them is to purify the senses, motor organs, inner instruments, etc, which are their products and neutralise their evil effects. So, there are six kinds of Bhaktis associated with six stages of spiritual progress.

A. Viśvāsa(Śraddhā)-bhakti of Bhakta

The word 'viśvāsa' or śraddhā has been used by Basavaṇṇa and other Vacanakāras in two senses. Translated as 'faith' it means faith in truth of the Guru's statements (guru-vacana). Just as the Hindus (Vēdic people) believe in the veracity and infallibility of the Vēdic statements, so the Liṅgāyats believe in the veracity and infallibility of the Guru's statements. The truth of these statements is based neither on sense perception nor on speculation nor on logical inference, but on direct, self-experience (svānubhāva). The Guru teaches what he has experienced directly in the mystic intuition and the disciples and followers believe it without doubting it. If the initiate does not have faith in his Guru's statements such as, "God is infinite consciousness", "Uniting with it is the ultimate aim of spiritual life", "Worldly life is worthless", and so on, he does not begin the spiritual journey at all. In short, faith in the Guru-vacana is the strongest foundation of Śiva-devotion.

In the second sense viśvāsa (faith) means confidence. In this sense, says Basavaṇṇa, the devotee should have faith in the compassionate nature of Śiva and show firm devotion to him. Does not Śiva respond favourably to faithful devotional call of the devotee[2]? If you trust Guru and entrust yourself to his care he will certainly guide you to liberation. He should also believe that Śiva tests the depth of his devotion often and therefore, he should lead a life which pleases Śiva[3]. He may not achieve his worldly goal in spite of his steadfast devotion,

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but if he does not lose faith in Śiva, he will definitely take care of us[4].

There are always people who doubt the veracity of our beliefs and inefficacy of our practices. But there should be a limit to their doubts. It is sane to doubt the honesty of a strange person; but it is insane to doubt our friends, relatives and the like. If I unnecessarily suspect that the train by which I am travelling tomorrow may be sabotaged I cannot travel at all. In fact, most of our daily affairs depend on trust, trust in others, trust in the uniformity of nature and so on. Needless doubt is not only insane, but also makes our life almost impossible. Similarly, if we unnecessarily doubt the veracity of our religious beliefs and inefficacy of our practices we cannot start spiritual journey at all.

In support of this we can advance two arguments. 1. The Guru is one who has already achieved the goal and there is no reason why we should lose faith in such a Guru. He knows the proper way of the goal and therefore, we cannot but believe him. We should believe that only he can successfully guide us to liberation. 2. Let us take an example from science. Scientists have arriVēd at the conclusion after several experiments that pure water begins to boil at sea level at 100 degree centigrade. Any doubt of their conclusion can be cleared by another experiment. Similarly, if any doubt of Guru-vacana that God resides in the six cakras should be cleared by making spiritual experiments on the lines advocated by Guru.

Just because viśvāsa (faith) is not empirically or inferentially verifiable it does not follow that it is uncertain. Descartes might have advised us not to believe anything as true unless it is certified by reason. But many philosophers, both his contemporaries and the subsequent ones, have established the truth that reason cannot prove the existence of any reality, let alone God.

Liṅgāyats never doubted the existence of God (Liṅga), soul and the possibility of its uniting with God. They thought that those who doubted the veracity and practicability of the

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Liṅgāyat doctrines were Bhavis. In fact, anyone who sticks to the point that unless somebody proves the veracity of Guru-vacanas he will not become a Liṅgāyat, can never become a Liṅgāyat.

Blaze Pascal compared faith to wager[5]. One who wages thinks that if he wins he will gain more and if he loses he will lose insignificant little; similarly, a person of faith engages in religious activity hoping to gain heaven; if his belief is true he will attain heaven; if it is false he loses not much. But a Liṅgāyat's faith is a conviction, not an oscillation between certainty and uncertainty. The gambler may stop gambling when he realises that he is not going to win. But a true Liṅgāyat does not give up his faith even in the midst of worst situation.

Faith is not merely an obedient intellectual assent of the devotee, but something which decides his concerns and attitudes. If one is an agnostic or an atheist he may lead an immoral or irreligious life or he may be indifferent to religious truths. But if one has faith in Guru-vacana he cannot be religiously and morally indifferent. One who knows that a politician whom he does not know is lecturing in the next hall, may be indifferent to his lecture; but one who knows that a burglar has come to his house cannot be indifferent to his presence. He shows utmost fear and tries to get rid of him as early as possible. Similarly, one who is convinced of the truth of Guru-vacanas is eager to practise the religious principles enshrined in them. One who is convinced that God punishes the wicked tries his best to avoid wicked behaviour. "One must not cast lustful eye at other's wives" is a belief; not casting lustful eye at other's wife is a discipline (ācāra), says Cennabasavaṇṇa[6].

Some people argue that despite the fact that wicked people believe that God punishes them they are involved in wicked acts. They may cite the instance of Duryōdhana in the *Mahābhārata* who says that he knows the distinction between good and bad but cannot avoid doing bad. This argument does not falsify our stand, because people like Duryōdhana believe

that God punishes the wicked and that they are ready to accept the punishment rather than avoiding the evil behaviour.

Faith is not something which is imposed on us, but a free choice. When Basavaṇṇa says, "If you say 'Hey, You!' you go to hell; if you say, 'Sir' you will go to heaven"[7]. Hell or heaven is your choice. A belief forced on you is not your choice.

Faith is not speciality of Liṅgāyatism. It is the essence of all religions. For example, it is called 'samyag-dṛṣṭi' in Buddhism and Śravaṇa in the Upaniṣads. It is a set of beliefs and doctrines which an aspirant must learn, because they are the basis and guidelines of his religion activities.

Following are the important beliefs and doctrines in which the aspirant is expected to have faith.

1. Man is a form of Liṅga and realising Liṅga is the final goal of life.

2. Man is caught in a cycle of birth and death, his present predicament is despicable, marevu (forgetfulness) is the cause of this predicament and the cycle can be stopped permanently by a spiritual programme under the guidance of an efficient Guru.

3. Guru, Iṣṭa-liṅga and Jaṅgama are forms of God. Man should be grateful to Guru for guiding him to shed the wretched life of bondage and getting liberation[8]. Jaṅgama, who has identified himself with God is also God and has his duty (Kāyaka) of mentoring the society. Serving all Jaṅgamas is more important[9] than worshipping Liṅga or visiting holy places[10].

4. There are six cakras or padmas (plexes) in the human body and Liṅga (God) resides in the centre of each cakra. He should learn the technique of realising Liṅga in them.

5. Steadfast devotion is necessary for the acquisition of divine grace which in turn is necessary for the attainment of liberation.

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6. Prasāda is not just food offered to Liṅga, but all objects of senses, senses, motor organs, cognitive instruments and the physical body. One who experiences objects with this conviction makes his personality sanctified.

7. Man can attain liberation in an embodied state.

B. Mahēśa's Steadfast Devotion (Niṣṭhā-bhakti)

Faith in the veracity of the beliefs and doctrines is certainly not devotion. But without faith devotion is impossible. Devotion without faith is like moving in the dark. One may imitate the real Bhakta's worship, Mantra-chanting, Prasāda-eating, etc. very meticulously, but unless these acts have philosophical justification which he does not know, they are futile like enthroning a headless body[10a]. Knowledge makes him active in manifold ways.

Ṣaṭ-sthala-yōga is pre-eminently a Yōga in which devotion is the sun around which revolve other acts like incantation of Mantra, meditation leading to mystic union, Kāyaka-Dāsōha, etc. In fact, they are regarded as necessary parts of devotion, or different forms of the same devotion. While the worship of Iṣṭa-liṅga is a way of pleasing the immovable formless God, Dāsōha is a way of pleasing the moving Liṅgas (Jaṅgama-liṅgas), the living beings. Ṣaṭ-sthala-yōga covers all forms of devotion and leaves nothing wanting.

Devotion is an inseparable man-God relation. According to Liṅgāyatism, devotion is love, steadfast (niṣṭhā) and selfless (niṣkāma). When a human or animal mother loves her child it is selfless. She does not love her offspring in the hope that in future she will be rewarded appropriately. If a mother takes a loving care of her blind or limbless son it is selfless love. Similarly, a devotee should love God selflessly. His sole aim should be liberation which is free from all selfish desires.

If liberation is the reward of devotion then the devotee should have a rational conception of God. Basavaṇṇa abhors the worship of petty or minor gods, like Māri, Bīra, Kēta,

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Vīrabhadra, etc. for more than one reason. If God is the most superior being than which nothing greater can be conceived, he alone deserves worship and gods who occupy deserted and haunted places, gods who pester their devotees for petty food, like porridge, chicken etc. and gods who are deformed or melt in the presence of fire, do not deserve worship. Secondly, their worship is caused by fear, not love or devotion. Thirdly, their worship involves demand for certain rewards. If the devotee is dissatisfied with the results, he may throw away them. None of such gods is able to grace the devotee to attain liberation[11].

Basavaṇṇa notes that man's attitude to the Vēdic gods like Indra, Varuṇa, etc. cannot be called devotion. It is like that of a buyer to a seller. He offers certain things to gods and expects from them certain worldly benefits, like cattle, sons, success in war, etc. Moreover, the offer is done not directly, but through the medium of a priest (purōhita) who should always be a Brahmin. Even a king who knows how to perform the sacrifice is prohibited to perform it. So, one who wants to show his devotion through his offer has to ultimately depend on the priest.

The Vēdic sacrifices which sometimes involve animal sacrifice presuppose that gods abide in a far off region like terrestrial, atmospheric and celestial regions, that their mysterious nature is known only to the priests and that only priests know the art of pleasing them. Basavaṇṇa rejected the idea of God being restricted to places. He rejected the idea of sacrifice as a way of devotion, for the reasons that it presupposes polytheism, that gods love meat, that performance of sacrifices is a costly affair and that they do not help in attaining liberation as they are a kind of commerce between gods and man. Most importantly, Basavaṇṇa held that compassion is religion while for heartless Vēdic people killing goats and other animals as a sacrifice was the heart of religion.

Nor does Liṅgāyatism approve of worship in temples as a means of devotion, because the devotee cannot worship God directly, as a priest does it on his behalf. To Basavaṇṇa it is a ridiculous practice, contrasted with the worship of Iṣṭa-liṅga. He

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asks us to note that Iṣṭa-liṅga is the symbol of one's own soul which is but God and that when one worships it, one worships *one's own* God, not some God who is elsewhere. Using an analogy, which is a little rude, he says that asking someone to worship your God on your behalf, like asking someone else to love your wife on your behalf or like asking someone else to eat on your behalf, is ridiculous[12]. It loudly says that you have no love for God. The devotee has to watch the worship from a distance. The distance between God's image and the devotees is determined by the caste of the devotee. The high-born can stand near the image and the low-born a little away from it.

This continuous maintenance of relationship between the devotee and God through worship, Mantra chanting, etc. is the confirmation of niṣṭhā (loyalty).

Similarly, gods like Indra, Brahma, Rāma, Kṛṣṇa do not deserve worship, for at least three reasons. 1. None of them is eternal, because like humans they have birth and death[13]. 2. They do not create, maintain and destroy the world. 3. They suffered in many ways in their Avatāras and therefore, they are in no way greater than man.

Liṅgāyats in general reject the argument that Brahma who creates, Viṣṇu who maintains and so on deserve worship. That there are many gods and that they perform different cosmic functions is a metaphysical error, while worshipping many gods is a religious error. Polytheism necessarily involves selfish devotion (sakāma-bhakti), the opposite of desire for liberation. Most of the Vacanakāras compare the worship of many gods to a wife's adultery[14]. Even worshipping the installed Liṅga is condemned[15].

One may object that Basavaṇṇa, on the one hand, proposes that God is one, but has many names[16], and on the other, objects to the worship of Indra, Māri, Kēta, Viṣṇu, Vīrabhadra, etc.; this is contradiction (please read 'Initiation' in the previous Chapter).

Similarly, the objection that installed Liṅga and Iṣṭa-liṅga are the same, as both are the emblems of the same God,

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Śiva, holds no water, because while the worship of installed Liṅga is worship of Śiva who abides in Kailāsa, has a wife, sons, etc., the worship of Iṣṭa-liṅga is the worship of formless Śiva. We should not be carried away by the word 'Śiva' which is used as name of the different emblems. Moreover, one who worships Iṣṭa-liṅga is aware that he is worshipping his own soul which is Śiva himself, while for the worshipper of installed Liṅga God is different from him.

1. Devotion to one God is love. Our knowledge that God has created us and has placed the whole world before us is the reason why we should love him gratefully. We cannot but admire his other qualities like omnipotence, compassion, forgiveness, etc. and our admiration compels us to love him. Worship without love is like a painting of sugar cane or beautiful girl – you cannot chew the cane or embrace the girl[17]. Nor should we love other gods. Worshipping other gods is like a wife loving other men than her husband[18].

2. One reason why Basavaṇṇa and other Vacanakāras reject polytheism is that it involves selfish devotion. Worship with selfish motives is, in fact, fatal to devotion. Once a few of our demands are fulfilled we place other demands before God and we are bound to be disappointed sometimes. If a devotee does not get the desired results, there is no reason for him to stick to the same god and he obviously chooses another god. Selfish worship and steadfast devotion do not go together. Allama Prabhu ridicules such devotees as those who without knowing how to ride the horse that is given to them complain of its colour, height, etc. and walk by its side carrying the saddle, belt, etc.[19]. Basavaṇṇa, however, vows not to place any demand before God[20]. He goes a step further and declares that let God beg him, but he will never beg God[21]. Even the desire to acquire religious merit (puṇya) or life in Kailāsa is a disqualification, for the devotee has to undergo existential limitations when he returns to the mortal world[22]. A woman Vacana-composer[23] ridicules that the idea of life in Kailāsa as a reward for worshipping is like demanding wages for a work.

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3. Undiminished and unquestioned confidence is another quality of Niṣṭhā-bhakti (steadfast devotion). The devotee should not doubt that Śiva loves his devotees; he should know that Śiva certainly responds favourably to those who pray to him with immovable faith[24]. But his faith should not be based on a wrong philosophy that he can commit moral evils and God will pardon him if he repents. Repent man should, but God does not like people who commit moral evils often and repent[25].

4. A devotee with steadfast devotion is so confident of his devotion that he is ready to be tested by God at any time. When difficulties befall him either he thinks that they are the irreversible results of his past Karma[26] or he regards them as impediments set by God himself in order to test the depth and steadfastness of his devotion. But he decides never to complain or grumble. Rather for Basavaṇṇa steadfast devotion involves a kind of challenge. He would resolve that even in the face of worst kind of torments he would not pray to God to save him[27]; rather, he would say that let God threaten him to kill, he should resolve to win[28]. If he decides to withstand all difficulties, it is because of his steadfast devotion. Without steadfast devotion all his acts like worship, incantation of Mantra and even his virtuous conduct including performance of Dāsōha are a sheer waste. They may at best be altruistic, but are vain spiritually.

5. Steadfast devotion necessarily involves continuity. Devotion must be deep and continuous. In the beginning the seeker may have deep devotion, but it may not be continuous. Basavaṇṇa notes the psychology of devotees who show great enthusiasm in the beginning and find it laborious in course of time[29]. In the beginning they prostrate, but later they fold their hands from a distance and pass on.

Continuity, however, does not mean long and elaborate worship. Basavaṇṇa and other Vacanakāras have condemned the worship which involves the use of various kinds of flowers and leaves, variety of dishes and long and complicated Sanskrit Mantras. According to the Āgamas, using more instruments

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means greatness of worship. If the bell, cup, spoon, plate, etc. made of silver are used the worship is better and if the same made of gold are used the worship is better still[30]. Basavaṇṇa ṇotes that this only increases vanity of the worshipper, not the intensity of his devotion. In fact, it is in no way devotion, let alone great devotion[31]. Similarly, loud utterance of Vēdic Mantras is not a mark of devotion[32]. Our devotion is deep and more effective in our silent solitude[33].

Vows (vratas)

For Basavaṇṇa devotion (Bhakti) is a vow, a vow not to give up devotion at any cost. But all vows (vratas or nēmas) are not steadfast devotion. Some vows are a part of devotion, but not a necessary part. Some people take the vow to offer milk, jaggery or some such thing to Liṅga in the hope of appeasing him. Allama Prabhu ridiculing such people says, "One who has taken a vow of milk shall find rebirth as a cat; one who has taken a vow of horse-gram shall find rebirth as a horse"[34]. Similarly, Akkamma asks why should we take a vow to offer water obtained from well or springs[35]? These devotees of vows unknowingly degrade God to their level.

Cennabasavaṇṇa condemns vow-taking for two more reasons. Vows have selfish ends. People instead of gaining the redeeming knowledge resort to easy way of purifying themselves[36] and once their selfish wish is fulfilled they discontinue the vow[37]. Sometimes vows turn out mechanical acts and do not in any way help the devotee progress spiritually[38].

It is not that vow-keeping is totally useless. The real intention of vow-keeping should be to get rid of worldliness that impedes our spiritual progress. Akkamma saya:

What is vow? It is a ladder
That helps us attain the Substance.
What is vow? It is a weapon
That breaks the joints of senses.
. . . It is a destruction of all defects . . .[39]

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Cennabasavaṇṇa asks, if one has steadfast devotion, why should he take any vow at all[40]? For Basavaṇṇa vow is not fasting or shaving one's head or wearing ochre robe, but moral resolution. He says that a real Śaraṇa should vow not to cast lustful eye at other's wife or wealth[41]. These two vows, according to Maḍivāḷa Mācidēva, are equal to 64 vows[42].

Company of the Śaraṇas

In the beginning of spiritual journey the seeker's devotional attitude is so fragile that he may easily slip back to worldly state. So that this should not happen the Śaraṇas prescribe two rules – the seeker should avoid relation with Bhavis and he should keep company with Śaraṇas. The reason behind the first rule is that he should not learn the non-Liṅgāyat practices. People who are newly converted to Liṅgāyatism should forget their old relations. For example, if a Brahmin becomes a Liṅgāyat, he should not practise caste discrimination[43]. The practice of some Brahmins wearing sacred thread even after converting to Liṅgāyatism proves the futility of their conversion[44]. Such people, says Cennabasavaṇṇa, are only bodily Liṅgāyats (tanu-bhktas), but are non-Liṅgāyats mentally (mana-Bhavis)[45].

Basavaṇṇa insists that no Liṅgāyat serve food to Bhavi, nor dine with him[46]. The reason is that a Liṅgāyat treats every morsel of food and every drop of water as Prasāda of God, whereas Bhavi does not do so. If the Bhavi is a parent, brother, sister or friend of the newly convert, he/she may compel him to follow them. If he yields to their coercion or request the very purpose of conversion is defeated[47].

During (and prior to) Basavaṇṇa's time there used to be the practice of marriage relations between the Jains and the Śiva-devotees, though such cases were few and far between. For example, Akka Mahādēvi and Vaijakkavve, Śiva-devotees, had Jain husbands. Similarly, Śiva-devotees had non-Śaiva (Bhavi) wives. In such cases, wife worships one God and her husband another. Cennabasavaṇṇa condemns such relations

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in harsh words. Presence of a Bhavi-wife in the house is worse than that of a dog. But the husband who refuses to eat the orts of a dog is ready to eat the orts of his Bhavi-wife who is worse than a dog[48].

If the devotee should deepen and continue his devotion he should be in the company of advanced spiritual seekers. An advanced spiritual seeker should be free from selfish desires and Karma-results[49]. Such a one has no rebirth[50] and is like the image of God[51]. The novice should regard him as visible God[52], because he has identified himself with God. He talks Liṅga and lives Liṅga and is, therefore, an ideal company.

The company of advanced spiritual seekers makes him engaged in self-analysis, self-assessment and self-criticism, and this allows him to learn from them what he lacks in. He learns from them not only certain metaphysical doctrines but also certain moral and spiritual practices, which are necessary for his spiritual progress[53]. Constant observation of their talks, discourses and practices leaves a deep impression on him[54]. For this reason the serious spiritual seeker, says Basavaṇṇa, should prefer the company of great Śiva-devotees, even if they be low caste, to the company of Bhavis who are ready to share their wealth or kingdom[55]. It is better to be a servant in the house of a Śiva-devotee who asks you to make arrangement for his Śiva-worship than to be a queen[56].

The seeker is often advised to serve the Guru physically, who pleased by his service compassionately teaches him the ways and means of conquering the Bhava[57]. Sometimes he may punish him for his mistakes, but he should tolerate it, like bitter medicine[58].

Service of Gurus and other advanced seekers is the best way of losing arrogance and selfishness. Bhakti, says Basavaṇṇa, is like a see-saw which cuts your ego both while coming and going[59]. A serious seeker must be ready to love God at the cost of selfishness, arrogance and I-sense. One who is not ready for the loss cannot be a Mahēśa.

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C. Mindful Devotion (Avadhāna-bhakti) of Prasādi

The concept of Prasāda cuts across the other concepts of Liṅgāyatism, such as God, devotion, Jaṅgama, oneness of Aṅga and Liṅga, etc. such that without understanding it we cannot understand the rest of the concepts properly (see Prasāda under Eight Aids of Faith).

The Prasāda-eating involves the philosophical doctrine that God has created, or has become everything, or has given us everything, and that man should stop claiming ownership of things. Jēḍara Dāsimayya says when land, seeds, oxen, crops, rains, etc. are gifts of God, the claim that I have earned this or that and the claim that I have gifted this or that loses its meaning. It is, therefore, more important that the devotee who consumes food must have the conviction that he is eating or drinking a form of God. This conviction is technically called Avadhāna-bhakti (vigilant devotion) and it must come to the fore to influence all his experiences. As a result of such conviction his physical personality (bhūta-kāya) evolves into Prasāda-kāya (sanctified personality). So every occasion of eating or drinking is an occasion of sanctifying oneself.

Though the whole world is God's creation, to treat it as Prasāda or not is left to the choice of the devotee. As Cennabasavaṇṇa says, Prasāda transcends God's creation[60]. God creates poison as well as nectar. But Basavaṇṇa converted poison to nectar[61]. It is the firm duty of the devotee to have faith in Prasāda. If he believes, even poison turns out nectar; if he does not, even nectar turns poison[62].

What makes the Liṅgāyat concept of Prasāda distinctly unique is the idea that Prasāda means not only food and drink, but all objects of sense. Thus the sense objects, smell, form, taste, sound and touch, are also to be offered to Liṅga before they are experienced by the devotee as Prasāda[63]. One may object that it is easy for us to see, touch and offer food to Liṅga, but how can we see, touch and offer smell or sound? Cennabasavaṇṇa who had expected this question answers that we must offer smell by the nose itself, taste by the tongue itself,

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form by the eyes themselves, and so on[64]. Again, one may object that if we see the form or hear the sound, it becomes impure (eñjalu) and as such becomes unfit to be offered to God[65]. So, either we offer impure objects seen or touched or smelt, or we cannot offer any object at all[66]. The only answer to this is to install Liṅga at the gate of each sense so that we experience the smell, sound, etc. as Prasāda only after Liṅga at the gate enjoys it[67]. This is possible only for a Sarvāṅga-liṅgi (one who has installed Liṅga in all his organs) or one who has identified himself with Liṅga by means of mystic experience. Such a one thinks that his senses, motor organs, internal instruments, etc. are not his but those of Liṅga. His whole personality, as Basavaṇṇa[68] and Allama[69] would say has become Prasāda-kāya (Prasāda-personality). He thinks that when he eats, Paraśiva is pleased; or that Paraśiva eats through the mouth of the devotee. This is often called *saha-bhōjana* (eating together) and is compared to a pregnant woman's eating – when she eats, the child in her womb is satisfied. From this the seeker should learn that he, the world (Prasāda) and God are one. It is important for the devotee to realise that as all things are products of Śiva, there should be no discrimination between good things and bad things[70]. We should offer the pleasant morning sunlight as well as the scorching noon sunlight. Whatever is the nature of a thing, it must be offered to Liṅga[71].

Some experiences which are very private, argue some devotees, cannot be offered to God. But Cennabasavaṇṇa considers this wrong. He says, " . . . If one can offer to Liṅga without letting his mind touch it, after removing its earlier defects, embrace, touch, blissful union and receive it back, he is Prasādi"[72]. In other words, even embrace, etc. should be offered and experienced as Prasāda.

Offering things does not prevent the devotee from enjoying the related happiness. It is actually a golden mean between complete renunciation and eagerness to enjoy selfishly. Embracing, touching and uniting with other sex purely for carnal pleasure is selfishness; doing the same for Liṅga or regarding one's pleasure as that of Liṅga is Prasāda. As Basavaṇṇa says,

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If you say, 'no', it is renunciation;
If you say, 'I like', it is carnal desire;
Whatever it is, if you enjoy it
After offering it to Liṅga –
That is discipline . . .[73]

Most importantly, the devotee should think that since all that exists is Prasāda, nothing belongs to man, and therefore, he should not claim ownership of anything. Once he realises this he goes on freeing himself from selfishness. So Avadhāna (vigilance) is a lesson in gradual lessening of selfishness, which is an essential attribute of spiritual life.

This should also help him realise that he, as an individual devotee, the world and Liṅga are one.

We should not kill animals and eat them and drink intoxicating drink in the name of Prasāda[74].

The devotee should develop vigilance (avadhāna) to receive all things as Prasāda. To say this is to say that we should convert the eyes, nose, ears and other senses (and motor organs) into Bhaktas which receive the forms, smells, sounds, etc. Cennabasavaṇṇa says,

They say all smells, sounds, etc. should be offered.
But they do not know all senses are included.
We should offer all senses including ears,
Eyes, nose, tongue and skin . . .[75]

The senses cannot become Bhaktas unless they are purified and they are purified when the seeker treats his senses as those of Liṅga. But they become Liṅga's senses only when the devotee rids them of their inherent verdigris before offering them to Liṅga[76]. In other words, one cannot regard the senses which function selfishly as those of Liṅga.

D. Mystical Devotion (anubhāva-bhakti) of Prāṇa-liṅgi

From the day of his initiation the devotee should try to strengthen his relation with Liṅga. A meaningful relation is one in which he loses as much of selfishness as possible. While

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offering external things to Liṅga is one way of losing selfishness, having mystic experience (anubhāva) is a better way. One may perform a long and elaborate worship or even perform Dāsōha regularly, but unless his worship does not end in blissful oneness with Liṅga his devotional activities are incomplete[77].

According to Liṅgāyatism, there are ten airs (or one air which functions in ten ways as) Prāṇa, Samāna, Udāna, Apāna, Vyāna, Kūrma, Kṛkara, Nāga, Dēvadatta and Dhanañjaya. Digestion, blood circulation, walking, sitting, urinating, talking, sneezing and other bodily functions are due to movements of these airs. As they are impure, they make us worldly-minded. Similarly, the five material elements, which are also impure, are believed to turn us away from spiritual pursuits, thus strengthening our bondage to worldly existence (Bhava-bandhana)[78]. As we are controlled by the airs and the elements we are called 'vāyu-prāṇi' and 'bhūta-prāṇi'. But by means of Āsanas (Yōgic postures) and Prāṇāyāma (regulated breathing) we can regulate the directions and speed of the airs so that we are bodily and mentally purified. This twofold purification helps us perform an effective meditation leading to mystic experience.

The word 'anubhāva' is used in the Vacanas in two senses – mystic experience and the company of, or discussion with, the mystics. A serious devotee must be in the company of Yōgis (mystics), talk to them and learn from them the way of having mystic union with Liṅga. However, Allama warns, if people who love worldliness talk of mystic union without making serious spiritual efforts, their keeping company with the mystics is futile[79](nowadays the word has become a synonym of lecture on Liṅgāyat religion and ethics).

By undergoing training in Śiva-yōga (or Ṣaṭ-sthala-yōga) he can eradicate the impurities of the body-mind complex and make it a fit place for Liṅga. He should be convinced that Liṅga (God) is not elsewhere but is within himself and by undergoing Śiva-yōga he can realise it; and that the Bhaktis (Bhakti-forces) which help him in his spiritual pursuit are within himself. The Vacanakāras use an analogy to drive home this

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point. Though there is ghee in the milk of cow, the cow is not fat; but if we heat its milk, take out its creamy layer, make it curds, churn out the butter and heat it, we get ghee. If we feed the cow with ghee it becomes fat. Similarly, Liṅga that is in us can be realised by means of different processes of Ṣaṭ-sthala-yōga[80].

Anubhāva, also called 'Svānubhāva' (self-experience), 'Liṅgānubhava' (Liṅga-experience), 'Turīya' (fourth state), 'Advaita-sthiti' or 'Aikya-sthiti' (feeling of oneness), 'tanna tānariyuvudu' (knowing oneself), etc. is an extra-sensory and extra-intellectual experience (or knowledge). Its general nature can be introduced by distinguishing it from sense perception. Our knowledge of objects is derived from the co-operation of the senses, mind, intellect, ego and soul. It is possible that I get simultaneously sensations like smell, sound, touch, etc.; when my manas (mind) concentrates on one sensation, smell, for example, my intellect (buddhi) determines it as smell of jasmine, compares and synthetises with other experiences and my ego says, 'I know the smell of jasmine'. According to Indian philosophers in general, except the materialist Cārvāka, mind, intellect, ego and the physical body function only if associated with soul, the spiritual substance.

The chief epistemological feature of sense experience is dualism, that I, the subject, am different from the object. I may not be aware of myself as distinctly as I am aware of the object, but an analysis of my experience reveals self-awareness, however dim, associated necessarily with the awareness of the object. There is no knowledge of external object without self-awareness or there is no sense perception without the I-It dualism.

In contrast, Liṅgānubhava (Liṅga-experience) is possible at all, only when all the sensory and inner cognitive instruments are inactive temporarily and when they are withdrawn from the sense object. Liṅgānubhava begins with the worship of Iṣṭa-liṅga. After the formal worship is over the worshipper starts dṛṣṭi-yōga, intent gazing at Iṣṭa-liṅga. As long

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as the worshipper thinks (wrongly) that the Iṣṭa-liṅga is Prāṇa-liṅga (God), it implies the presence of darkness in his mind, which is cast on Iṣṭa-liṅga. In other words, he cannot experience Prāṇa-liṅga which is his individual soul[81] or there will be no relation between the worshipper and Liṅga.

When the seeker controls the movement of the airs, he experiences the Iṣṭa-liṅga on the palm as 'mental Liṅga' (mana-liṅga or Prāṇa-liṅga). In other words, he feels[82] that his whole body is pervaded by Prāṇa-liṅga. The feeling is often accompanied by intellectual perception of brilliant light and feeling of ecstasy. The Liṅgāyat mystics term the light 'Liṅga' or Jyōtirliṅga' (light that is Liṅga) and the ecstasy 'Liṅgānanda' or 'Śivānanda'. When he is enjoying the supreme, incomparable bliss, he is aware of neither here nor hereafter[83]. According to Allama Prabhu, the feeling of ecstasy results from sipping the nectar oozing from the Sahasrāra-padma[84]. The bliss can neither be derived from other sources nor be compared to any pleasure known to man[85].

This is accompanied by a state in which the mystic becomes unaware of the external world, his body and his own mental states. He feels that his soul goes on expanding infinitely (or becoming Bayalu) or uniting with Liṅga. When he returns to waking state he compares it to a river merging in another river or in a sea, or that he was Liṅga in that state.

Three important results of the mystic experience draw our attention.

1. The Yōgi (mystic) directly experiences his soul (Prāṇa) in whose existence he had earlier belief but had not experienced it so far.
2. He experiences its existence, not in a particular part of his body or mind, but as pervading his entire personality. For this particular reason he is called sarvāṅga-liṅgi (one whose all parts are pervaded by Liṅga).
3. This Prāṇa-liṅga or individual soul which he experiences in the mystic state is bereft of its individuality or separateness from the universal soul (Liṅga), but is

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identified with it. Therefore, he is able to say that his Prāṇa is Liṅga and Liṅga is Prāṇa. He calls his soul, rightly, Prāṇa-liṅga.

Now this advanced seeker, unlike the seeker of the primary stages, cannot offer water, food, etc. to Liṅga, because he has converted his soul to Prāṇa-liṅga. In other words, while others distinguish between themselves and Liṅga, the mystic seeker, Prāṇa-liṅgi, considers his experiences as those of Liṅga[86]. Therefore, his body itself is a temple[87] or Kailāsa[88]. While others meditate on Liṅga, because they distinguish themselves from Liṅga on whom they meditate, Prāṇa-liṅgi cannot do so because his body and mind have become Liṅga[89].

Liṅga-experience is also a kind of devotion – in fact, the real or highest kind of devotion. Because in the dualist worship of Iṣṭa-liṅga the devotee is involved in external acts, while in the Liṅga-experience he deals directly with Liṅga, by becoming Liṅga.

Ceasing to regard himself as different from God the seeker is slowly ridding himself of the I-sense and selfishness, which are the root cause of suffering and bondage.

There are thousands of Vacanas which deal with Liṅgāyat beliefs and practices, but there are no Vacanas which give us details of practices leading to Liṅga-experience. There are, of course, Vacanas which guide us to choose particular Yōgāsanas and Prāṇāyāmas, but no Vacana tells us how to perform them or how to perform meditation which leads to mystic experience. The reason for the absence of such Vacanas is that we cannot learn spiritual lessons from books – we require the practical guidance of an efficient Guru in this matter. In fact, in some systems certain kind of knowledge is imparted to a chosen few in a secret place and the knowledge itself is regarded as secret (rahasya). However, the teaching of Liṅgānubhava is not considered as secret and can be imparted to any serious seeker.

Liṅgāyats believe that the procedures of Pātañjala- and other schools of Yōga are long, strenuous and complicated while those of Ṣaṭ-sthala-yōga are short and simple and the desired

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results are quicker and greater. They prescribe very few āsanas and simple prāṇāyāmas.

Allama Prabhu and others advocate the gradual realisation of Liṅga in the six plexuses called Ādhāra, Svādhiṣṭhāna, Maṇipūraka, Anāhata, Viśuddhi and Ājñā and finally enjoying the ecstasy of sipping the nectar oozing from the Sahasrāra-padma. One who realises them is called Prāṇa-liṅgi or Sarvāṅga-liṅgi (one who has realised Liṅga that is in all parts of the body). The seeker earlier believed that Liṅga existed in all living beings (Jaṅgama-liṅga). Now because of Liṅga-experience he is convinced that all living beings are really moving Liṅga[90].

E. Blissful Devotion (Ānanda-bhakti) of Śaraṇa

Prior to the second half of the previous century the word 'Bhavi' was used as an antonym of 'Liṅgāyat'. But the modern Liṅgāyats have replaced it by the word 'Śaraṇa', not as a mark of their religious large-heartedness, but as a token of etiquette. So, they use the word as a prefix to all names irrespective of religious reference (e.g. Śaraṇa Abdul Rehman). But in the context of Vacanas the word 'Śaraṇa' refers to all Liṅgāyats in general and to the spiritual seeker of the fifth stage (Śaraṇa-sthala) in particular. The word means one who has surrendered his all (to Liṅga). It may be noted that the seeker as a Prasādi has learnt to experience vigilantly all things as Prasāda and as Prāṇa-liṅgi to lose as many selfish desires as possible. In the next stage, Śaraṇa-sthala, he, without much exertion, offers his all to Liṅga. The result is freedom from all cares and availability of enough time for meditation leading to mystic bliss. Since he has made his body Śiva's temple, he desires that Śiva should reside in him always. But at the same time, like Basavaṇṇa, he prays to Śiva to make his body a musical instrument and to play on it to produce prayers of different tunes[91]. He is always eager to see Liṅga, worship it and meditate on it[92]. When he does so, he is happy and when he cannot, unhappy.

Liṅgāyat mystics, like many of their Christian counterparts, call this strong bond of love between man and

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God 'bridal mysticism'. Many Śaraṇas regard themselves as wives of Śiva[93]. Uriliṅga Dēva, a contemporary of Basavaṇṇa, has written many Vacanas to express his strong love for Śiva as his husband[94]. Sometimes he goes to the extent of describing mystic bliss as sexual ecstasy[95].

Unless we make our personality a Prasāda-kāya (converting the physical or worldly forces to spiritual forces or Bhakti-śaktis) we cannot pray to Śiva to settle in us. In the words of Basavaṇṇa, we should, as a wife does, cleanse our eyes before we see Liṅga, our hands before we touch Liṅga, our legs before we go near Liṅga and our head before we unite with Liṅga[96].

Though Akka Mahādēvi was married, she did not have physical relation with her husband. In fact, she declared that embracing a mortal husband is like embracing a barbed wire. Some may say that when she treats Liṅga (whom she calls Cenna Mallikārjuna) as her celestial husband it is understandable, but the same attitude of men to God is not. It is understandable, for two plausible reasons: the traditional faithful wife shows love and loyalty to her husband by her readiness to sacrifice her personal happiness for his well-being. She is the model for the faithful Śaraṇa. In matters of sacrificing selfish desires he emulates her. Secondly, the mystical experience is accompanied by incomparable, otherworldly joy. Though the seeker describes the ecstasy as incomparable and otherworldly, he does compare it to the only worldly joy that comes very close to it, namely, the conjugal love. However, we should not forget that it is only an analogy, and like other analogies it is imperfect.

The intensity of mystical bliss to a certain extent diminishes when the mystic returns to waking state and goes on diminishing till he has another experience. In such cases he craves for mystical union and when his desire is not fulfilled he is deeply hurt. Then, he like Basavaṇṇa, asks, "Can I live if my husband rejects me?"[97]. He is often gripped by the fear of losing mystic bliss which he regards as divine grace.

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Śaraṇa is of the opinion that there is no higher ecstasy than the mystical bliss (ānanda). Therefore, either he craves for it or rejects all else. The occult powers acquired by the Yōgis, the celestial cow, the wish gem, the positions of Brahma, Viṣṇu, Indra, etc. fade into insignificance when compared to it[98]. Moreover, since he has realised that he, the world and God are one he does not want anything. For one who has attained the highest bliss there is no necessity of any ritual[99].

F. Aikya's Devotion of Harmony (samarasa-bhakti)

In the beginning the Guru instructs the novice that he should realise Liṅga that is in him and the novice accepts it in good faith. The Iṣṭa-liṅga is only an emblem of the Prāṇa (individual soul) and Basavaṇṇa asks, why should one worship Iṣṭa-liṅga if the worship does not lead to blissful unity with Liṅga[100]? As Mahēśa he may worship it with steadfast devotion, as a Prasādi with vigilant devotion, as Prāṇa-liṅgi he may fill his mind with Liṅga and as a Śaraṇa he may enjoy the blissful union with Liṅga. But his spiritual practice does not come to an end until he has an unbroken conviction that he and Liṅga are not different. As Prāṇa-liṅgi he has mystic experience leading to the feeling of oneness with Liṅga, but when he returns to the waking state that feeling diminishes and dualism grips him again. As a Śaraṇa his love for Liṅga deepens and though he treats himself as wife of Liṅga and has unity experience, he does not forget that he as a wife is different from Liṅga, the husband; but when he has frequent Liṅga-experience, the conviction that he is Liṅga becomes indubitable knowledge.

One of the inevitable consequences of Liṅgānubhava is complete annihilation of ego (aham-nāśa). The mystic regards himself, not as a separate individual, but as one who has no ego (I-sense). To have a better understanding of this mysterious feature, we have to know the different meaning of aham (ego).

In one sense the Sanskrit word 'aham' ('I') means arrogance; so no one with aham can attain liberation. In the second sense, the word means self-centredness. One who is self-centred has six enemies of spiritual life, namely, lust, anger,

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greed, infatuation, arrogance and hatred and therefore, one who is selfish cannot attain liberation. In the third sense the word means 'individuality' or I-sense. Even if one says 'I am servant of God or I have no selfishness' he cannot attain liberation because he still regards himself as separate from Liṅga, others and the world. According to the Vacanakāras, when man makes no distinction between himself and the rest, he is liberated.

The spiritual aspirant in the earlier stages tries to lose selfishness and the I-sense. Once the I-sense is lost he loses selfish desires also; with the loss of selfish desires he loses the sense of agency; when he thinks that he is not the agent, his actions do not produce Karma-results and the consequent rebirth. In short, one who has become Liṅga is liberated embodied[101].

One who has become Liṅga (or identified himself with Liṅga) is called Aikya, i.e., one who has no I-sense. The word 'Aikya' or 'Liṅgaikya' is often misused, especially in the present context, to mean 'death'. As a mark of respect a Liṅgāyat who is dead is described as Liṅgaikya (while Bhavi is reborn repeatedly, Bhakta should (Liṅgāyat) attain liberation on this life). It is also influenced by the authors of *Śūnya-sampādanes*. For example, when Allama Prabhu takes off Iṣṭa-liṅga from the palm of Animiṣa, the latter's body collapses and (the author says) Animiṣa is described as immediately attaining oneness with Liṅga[102]. Similarly, when Maruḷu Śaṅkara Dēva was given spiritual instruction by Allama Prabhu, he was described as attaining liberation. And the author of *Śūnya-sampādane* continues to say that Maruḷu Śaṅkara Dēva's body, breath, mind and consciousness united with the Absolute and all these evaporated into Śūnya, without leaving a trace[103]. But the *Śūnya-sampādane*'s definition of Mōkṣa is shocking. Because its original meaning is 'one who has become one with Liṅga or Śiva *while still alive*'. Actually, Liṅgaikya is a mukta (liberated), who feels oneness of himself, Liṅga and the world and this feeling is possible only when one is alive. In the earlier stages also the seeker has Liṅga-experience, but that is not a permanent experience. As Cennabasavaṇṇa says Liṅgaikya is one who

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merges in Liṅga indistinguishably, and is not separated again[104]. Since he and Liṅga including the world are one he cannot make a distinction between internal and external things[105] or between the mortal world and divine world.

Aikya, the liberated one, is not expected to formally worship Liṅga or observe other formalities. Basavaṇṇa says that all the high-born have assembled to worship Liṅga, but I, an untouchable, have remained outside. This symbolic Vacana means that those in the earlier stages of spiritual journey worship Liṅga formally and for an Aikya worship of Liṅga as an external object is not necessary[106]. For Cennabasavaṇṇa the dualist attitude of distinguishing oneself from Prasāda is the attitude of a Bhavi, while the monist attitude of treating Prasādi, Prasāda and Liṅga as one is the attitude of a Liṅgāyat[107]. The Aikya's informal behaviour may appear to some as that of a Bhavi.

While for the Advaitin unity is unity of Ātman and Brahman and for one who has Brahman-experience the physical world and body-mind complex are Māyā, for the Vacanakāras, unity means unity of the body-mind complex made of Bhaktis and unity of Aṅga and Liṅga. When Cennabasavaṇṇa says it becomes clear:

It is you who standing at the door of nose
Enjoy the pleasures of scent;
It is you who, standing at the door of tongue
Enjoy the joys of the taste;
It is you who, standing at the door of eyes
Enjoy the pleasures of forms; . . .

The Aikya knows that his body, inner instruments, senses, motor organs, etc. are not his, but Lord's and that he is only a puppet in the hands of the Lord[108].

For the Aikya body, inner instruments, senses, motor organs, etc. are not impediments in the way to Mōkṣa, or are not a disqualification for liberation, but are instrumental cause of liberation. But he should regard them, not as his, but as Liṅga's. This is the essence of Samarasa (unitive life). The Aikya not merely feels oneness with Liṅga but lives a unitive life.

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Are there really six Bhaktis?

From the writings of scholars like Dr.R.C.Hiremath and Dr.H.Thipperudra Swamy one gets the impressions that there are six types of devotion (Bhakti) and that the first evolves into the second, the second into the third, and so on. However, both of these conclusions are false. For example, Dr.Hiremath writes[109]:

> **. . . by virtue of his steadfast devotion Mahēśa gains Śiva's grace and as a result, attains Prasādi-hood; thus, Prasādi-sthala begins[110]; devotion of vigilance (Avadhāna-bhakti) deepens . . . and becomes mystic experience (Anubhāva) and as a result, the seeker reaches Prāṇa-liṅgi-sthala . . . Anubhāva-bhakti (devotion of mystic experience) becomes Ānanda-bhakti (devotion of ecstssy) the seeker attains the Śaraṇa-sthala[111]; 'His Ānanda-bhakti becomes samarasa-bhakti (devotion of harmony)[112].**

Similarly, Dr.Swamy writes that

> **'Bhakta and Mahēśa are the first two steps' . . . 'Prasādi-stala and Prāṇa-liṅgi-sthala are important steps in the way of internal development'[113]. The seeker rises from the first stage to the Aikya-sthala gradually in his spiritual journey[114].**

This argument of these two scholars is unacceptable. Their presupposition that there are six kinds of devotion and the first evolves into second, the second into third, and so on is itself wrong. The falsity of their argument can be shown as follows.

The word Yōga has two meanings, the process and the product (of Yōga). This is true of Bhakti-yōga also. While Bhakti which is process is really one having six necessary characteristics, the products are different and successive. When

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the seeker realises Ācāra-liṅga that is in the Ādhāra-cakra, Guru-liṅga in the Svādhiṣṭhāna-cakra, and so on, he is called Bhakta, Mahēśa, and so on. From this we have to draw the conclusion that Bhakta, Mahēśa, Prasādi, etc. are successive stages and one should realise these stages only gradually.

Let us suppose (wrongly) that Bhaktis are different and evolve gradually. The chief attribute of Niṣṭhā-bhakti is steadfast devotion, which includes resolute moral behaviour (refraining from casting lustful look at other's wives, from acquiring others' wealth, etc.); the chief characteristic of Avadhāna-bhakti is to regard everything as the Prasāda of Liṅga. If these are different Bhaktis to be acquired *successively at different stages* then we are forced to think that the Bhakta (of the first stage) need not follow monotheism, or observe moral codes till he becomes a Mahēśa; he need not treat the different things of the world as Prasāda of Liṅga unless he becomes a Prasādi; need not practise Yōga (of Anubhāva-bhkati) unless he becomes a Prāṇa-liṅgi, and so on. Really it is impossible for a Bhakta to practise Bhakti without practising morality. Conceiving Bhaktis as different from one another is to pigeonhole them. But the Śaraṇas did not do this, and therefore, the scholars who treat Bhaktis as six stages of spiritual training are misinterpreting and misrepresenting them.

To prove our point we can take the example of Pātañjala-yōga. Just because parts (aṅgas) of Yōga are listed in a particular order it does not follow that the trainee (sādhaka) should practise them in the same order. It is ridiculous to think that the sādhaka cannot begin to learn the Āsanas until his training in Yama or Niyama is completed or that he cannot begin to learn the breathing exercises until he is well versed in all the Āsanas. But the fact is that one may begin to learn Āsanas along with breathing exercises and Pratyāhara (fifth on the list) and learn to live moral life. Similarly, it is ridiculous to think that a Liṅgāyat cannot learn the Yōga (fourth on the list) until he is well versed in Prasāda or steadfast devotion. The fact is that the day on which he is initiated (Bhakta, the first stage), he should learn steadfast devotion, strict monotheism, moral resoluteness,

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treating the world as Prasāda, Yōga-related activities, and so on. As a result, one day he will realise Liṅga in the Ādhāra-cakra (becomes a Bhakta); he should continue to practise the same and after a few days he realises Guru-liṅga in the Svādhiṣṭhāna-cakra (becomes a Mahēśa); and so on.

Secondly, the idea of one Bhakti (devotion) evolving into another is ridiculous. Steadfast devotion can never evolve into devotion of vigilance. If devotion of vigilance deepens it is still devotion of vigilance only and cannot, as Dr.Hiremath claims, become Anubhāva-bhakti (devotion of mystic experience). Because Anubhāva-bhakti requires Yōga practice specifically, and viewing the world as Prasāda of Liṅga is optional.

Instead of viewing Bhakti in this way, let us view it as one only having six necessary characteristics. The Bhakta must have strong faith (viśvāsa) in Guru-vacana, steadfast (niṣṭhā) devotion to Liṅga, treat mindfully the whole world as Prasāda of Liṅga, practise mystic experience (anubhāva) so that his entire personality is pervaded by Liṅga, surrender his all so that he is totally free from all cares and worries (ānanda) and finally, lead a unitive life (life in which he is inseparably and indistinguishably one with Liṅga).

A close observation of these characteristics reveals that they are different ways of overcoming the I-sense which is a great wall between Aṅga and Liṅga.

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CHAPTER TEN:

FIVE DISCIPLINES (PAÑCA ĀCĀRAS)

Liṅgāyatism has set experience of oneness of Aṅga and Liṅga as the goal of religious life and a set of five disciplines as the way to that goal. The discipline, which is really five-fold, (pañca ācāras) is broadly divisible into religious and moral. References to them are already found in different contexts earlier. These five disciplines are Liṅgācāra, Sadācāra, Śivācāra, Bhṛtyācāra and Gaṇācāra[1].

Liṅgācāra

Any act that is done for Liṅga is called Liṅgācāra (Liṅga-discipline). That is, Liṅgācāra is a set of acts which lead the seeker to the attainment of Liṅga. As such Liṅgācāra includes daily worship of Iṣṭa-liṅga and steadfast devotion to Liṅga. Worship must be mindful and not mechanical and must be free from selfish motives and exhibitionism[2]. Bhakti (devotion) is an attitude and may not always involve formal acts. One may sing the praise of Liṅga at any time and in any way one likes.

Since devotion is a constant, deep, selfless and total commitment, the devotee should try to establish Liṅga in his gross, subtle and causal bodies. He should give up the natural habit of enjoying things for himself and develop the habit of vigilantly experiencing all things only after Liṅga that is in his senses, motor organs and internal instruments has experienced. He should offer himself totally such that his self is reduced to naught. Only such a Liṅgācāra fetches him unity with Liṅga.

Sadācāra

Sadācāra (sat-ācāra = good conduct) refers to moral goodness that a devotee should possess. Though morality is

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regarded as a necessary part of Liṅgāyatism, sometimes Basavaṇṇa goes to the extent of identifying morality with religion. He declares, for example, that compassion is the root of dharma[3]. The word 'dharma', among others, means morality, religion, duty, etc. Even if we take the word to mean morality it means that morality stems from compassion, not from mechanical obeying others' words or from the desire for fame.

The traditional five vratas (vows), namely, Brahmacarya (non-adultery), ahimsā (non-violence), satya (truthfulness), astēya (non-stealing) and aparigraha (non-acceptance of things that do not duly belong to us) are negative. This has encouraged some to comment that Indian morality is just abstaining from bad actions and not doing anything good positively. But an analysis of these apparent proscriptions shows that the comment is malicious, wrong and baseless. To meet this comment let us ask, "What happens if we violate these proscriptions?" Adultery, telling lies, stealing, violence, receiving bribes and the like – all these cause violence to others. In fact, all these are different branches of the same, violence.

Similarly, many of the Vacanakāras ask us to abstain from wicked acts. Basavaṇṇa's famous Vacana asks us to abstain from stealing, killing, telling lies, being contemptuous to others, self-aggrandisement, etc.[4]. Cennabasavaṇṇa makes a list of 64 codes, of which some are religious and some moral. Both ask us to shun anger, greed, infatuation, promise-breaching, etc. Again, we are forced to note that a violation of these certainly causes suffering to the concerned. We may not do good to others, but at least we should refrain from doing causing suffering to others. Therefore, Basavaṇṇa prays to God

Rid me of my tongue desire, allure, ignorance, attraction,
Deceit, barb, anger, falsity . . .[5]

If morality is an integral part of spiritual life, it follows that one who is immoral has no right to worship. Basavaṇṇa asks, "If one does not know the proper way of behaving or the proper speech, what is the use of worshipping Liṅga?"[6] Elsewhere he

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concludes that for one who has committed sins and is short tempered Bhakti is not possible"[7] and if such a man pours water on Liṅga, it is as heinous as pouring blood on it[8]. Even killing animals in the name of religion does not justify immorality.

There are many Vacanas which declare that Śiva punishes the wicked. Whether one believes in this or not doing morally good acts is needed, because doing immoral act is selfish and if we avoid selfishness we automatically avoid immorality. If we are compassionate, we are unselfish and moral. One who has emptied his self of all selfish ideas is a pure soul, a fit place for Liṅga.

In this context we shall analyse Basavaṇṇa's statement that compassion is the root of dharma. One who has compassion to others refrains from telling lies and sticks to truthfulness; avoids barbs and decides to use soft language, refrains from stealing, adultery, killing, self-aggrandisement, animal sacrifice and such acts as harm others and decides to do things that please others.

It must be noted that only a selfless person can be totally compassionate. All his actions are different expressions of his compassion.

The factor associated with Basavaṇṇa's compassion, is his faith in the doctrine that all living beings are different forms of the omnipresent and immovable Liṅga (Sthāvara Liṅga). One who is convinced of the truth of this doctrine cannot but be compassionate. On many occasions Basavaṇṇa says that doing bad things incurs the wrath of Liṅga and inversely it follows that Liṅga approves of doing compassionate acts. In other words, compassion is the root of dharma, whether dharma be religion or morality.

For Cennabasavaṇṇa Kāyaka and Dāsōha also come under Sadācāra (good conduct). He is right in thinking that we must earn our livelihood in an honest way, such that it does not cause harm to others. Dishonest way of earning causes suffering to other moving Liṅgas and is, therefore, immoral and

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irreligious. We must earn more, not for hoarding but for Dāsōha of others who are unable to earn, like the old, the infirm and the have-nots. One who earns but refuses to do Dāsōha is worse than a crow or a hen which invites all its kith and kin when it sees a morsel of food[9].

While doing Dāsōha one must be humble, i.e., he should think that he is dāsa (servant) and Liṅga is the master, and that he is sharing God's gift (Prasāda) with others who are old or have-nots. Those who share his Prasāda must think that they are all children of Śiva and the Dāsōhi is their relative. The Dāsōhi must not on any account have selfish motive or arrogance.

Śivācāra

The word 'Śivācāra' is also used in the Vacanas as a synonym of Liṅgāyatism and is in few cases as a synonym of Tamil Śaivism. But in the present context, it specifically means that all Śaraṇas (Liṅgāyats) are equal. The Vēdic tradition discriminated people on the ground of caste, occupation and sex and even the Āgamas prescribe the rule that a Vīraśaiva (Liṅgī Brāhmaṇa) should not worship Liṅga with the flowers brought by Liṅgī Śūdra. Śivācāra is diametrically opposed to both the Vēdic and the Āgamic teaching.

Śivācāra is based on the philosophical doctrine that all are different forms of Liṅga. Basavaṇṇa has time and again said that the moving Liṅgas and the immovable Liṅga are essentially identical. The absence of evidence to claim that Śivahood is more in Brahmins and less in Śūdras or Untouchables is also the absence of evidence to the claim that Brahmins are superior to others. Therefore, a Liṅgāyat who has this knowledge should treat other Liṅgāyats as equal. He should not expect others to bow to him. To expect others to bow is a sign of superiority complex. He should bow to others – that is the sign of a Bhakta[10]. He should talk to them in a pleasing way, even if he is a Guru[11]. By maintaining such an attitude we can convert our world into Kailāsa. Basavaṇṇa not merely taught equality, he dined with low caste people – to the discomfort of

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other ministers and the king. His justification was that he dined with another Śiva-devotee, not with Brahmins who are Bhavis!

Cennabasavaṇṇa[13], Ambigara Cauḍayya[14] and others condemn the behaviour of some Gurus who after giving Iṣṭa-liṅga to people of low caste in initiating ceremony refused to eat in their houses, but took money, rice, ghee, etc. as fee.

Bhṛtyācāra

Bhṛtyācāra literally means the attitude of a Bhṛtya, servant, i.e., humility. It is a lesson in humility and, in fact, a part of Sadācāra. A Liṅgāyat should not only bow to others, but also be humble in his speech and deed. When he goes to others, he should not get his feet washed by them. A violation of this will reduce all his earlier devotional merit to nought. He should wash the host's feet – that is Bhṛtyācāra. Basavaṇṇa goes to the extent of advising people to travel to other Liṅgāyats' places and help them perform Dāsōha[15]. So there is a subtle difference here: when a Liṅgāyat comes to you, you should physically serve him; that is Sadācāra; but if you go to others and help them in their performance of Dāsōha that is Bhṛtyācāra. One should discover opportunities of helping others.

Bhṛtyācāra is a sure cure for egoism which is an impediment in the spiritual path. It is also a way of overcoming greediness, hatred, anger and infatuation. That is why Basavaṇṇa unhesitatingly said that none is less than him and none is greater than a Śiva-devotee[16]. This statement gets greater significance when we note that he was a Brahmin by birth and the prime minister to King Bijjaḷa.

Gaṇācāra

Gaṇācāra is the practice done in the interest of community (Gaṇa) of Liṅgāyats. According to Harihara and Bhīma Kavi frequent skirmishes among the Śaivas, Vaiṣṇavas and Jains took place in south India. Each group had to be concerned about its safety and welfare. Those who actually fought with the enemies were called 'Vīraśaivas', Vīra-vaiṣṇavas', etc.

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There are different degrees of Gaṇācāra. The Śiva-devotees shall not listen to the blasphemy of Śiva-faith[17]. They should voluntarily quit the place of the anti-Śiva-faith, along with other Gaṇas (members of Liṅgāyat group). Another way is to kill those who harm Śiva-devotee and Śiva-devotion, but only in self defence. It is believed that Jagadēva, Malla and Bommayya killed the king Bijjaḷa as an act of Gaṇācāra, because he got gouged the eyes two Śaraṇas, Haraḷayya and Madhuvarasa, and got them dragged by the elephants along the streets till their death.

Cennabasavaṇṇa has listed fifty practices (ācāras), though not all of them are Liṅgāyat practices. For example, a Śiva-devotee should raise the height of fence of his garden so that non-Liṅgāyats should not pollute the flowers grown there to be used for Liṅga-worship by seeing them; branding the backs of the cows and bulls with Liṅga mark is another ācāra; practising all the forty-nine ācāras regularly is the fiftieth ācāra!

This shows that he was perhaps a Śaiva before he began to practise principles of Basavaṇṇa's Liṅgāyatism.

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CHAPTER ELEVEN:

SOCIAL PHILOSOPHY

1. CASTE

When the Aryans came to India they had no castes like Brahmins, Kṣatriays, etc. but there were composers of Mantras and they were Ṛṣis. There were leaders of the group and they were Kṣatriays. There were no special people called Purōhitas (priests) who were appointed to perform the sacrifices and rituals. Every house had a sacrificial fire-pit into which the head of the family was daily pouring things like milk, ghee, etc. as sacrificial offer. He would wear the sacred thread only at the time of sacrifice. Since all were engaged in daily sacrifices, fighting the enemies and farming, necessity had forced them all to be Brahmins, Kṣatriyas and Vaiśyas, but without being so called. Even the Ṛṣis had killed their enemies. They were Ṛṣis because they authored Mantras.

Boys had to learn the Vēdas, combat skills, performing sacrifices and rituals, etc. in the teacher's residence that was in a forest. In that stage of life all boys were Śūdras. After marriage they would become farmers and then they were Vaiśyas. No young house-holder was sent to war. Only those who had reached the stage of Vānaprastha and were trained in the use of arms were sent to war. Then they were Kṣatriyas. Only the Ṛṣis and teachers were Brahmins.

In course of time, some rich people began to appoint men to do sacrifices on their behalf. They called them Purōhitas (priests). The priests were paid intoxicating drinks, meat, money, clothes, women and cows as fees. This engendered greed in the priests and the greedy priests multiplied the number

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of sacrifices, elaborated some of them, composed more Mantras and offered more things as sacrifices just in order to demand higher fees[1].

Still professions were not hereditary and there was room for choosing one's profession based on one's ability and natural propensity. Anyone who wanted to learn the Vēdas and attain Brahman-experience could become a Brahmin and one who had the spirit of fighting against the enemies and ruling the country could become a Kṣatriya. It is said that of the many sons a father had some became Brahmins, some Kṣatriyas and the others Vaiśyas. Even the Śūdras could learn the Mantras and perform the sacrifices and rituals. For example, it is said in the Yajurvēda that all Varṇas, including the Śūdras, are eligible to study the Vēdas.

Yathemām vācam kalāṇīmāvadāni janebhyaḥ brahma|
Rajanyābhyām Śūdrāya cāryāya ca svāyacāraṇāya ||[2]

[God says: Just as I have taught you the words (of the four Vēdas) for the welfare of all men, so also you should go on teaching (them); teach them to Brahmins, Rājans, Śūdras, Vaiśyas, Araṇāya (those who live in forests, i.e., tribes and untouchables) and women (svāya = one's one people)]. That is how there could be many Śūdra Ṛṣis in those days.

In course of time, study and teaching of the Vēdas, performance of sacrifices and rituals for others became hereditary profession. Similarly, those who enjoyed the royal status and benefits of ruling decided that only their sons should become kings. The Vaiśyas who owned lands got farming done by the Śūdra slaves and were engaged in trade. Therefore, because of these vested interests the choice of profession was gradually replaced by birth and ultimately the writers of Smṛtis wrote rules (called Laws, Dharma), called themselves gods on the earth (bhūsura) and ascribed divine origin to the rules, such that nobody questioned their authenticity and authority, even in future. They took the help of the ruling class to protect and preserve the Laws. The two classes worked hands in gloves. Later, Śrī Kṛṣṇa was made to declare in the *Bhagavadgītā* (1)

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that he himself created the four varṇas[3], (2) that nobody should choose the profession of other castes, though he could perform it better[4] and (3) that if anybody chose the profession prescribed for other castes, a great sin called Varṇa-saṅkara (mixing of castes) would result and those who participated in this heinous sin would go to hell[5]. When they framed inviolable Laws that they should not exchange their professions or establish marriage alliances among castes other than own, castes became water-tight compartments.

Manu, a noted Law writer, in order to prove the unquestioned superiority of the Brahmins, wrote, among others, the following Laws in his *Laws of Manu*[6].

1. Know that a Brāhmaṇa of ten years and Kṣatriya of a hundred years stand to each other in the relation of father and son; but between those two the Brāhmaṇa is the father[7].

2. Let (the first part of) a Brāhmaṇa's name be (denote something) auspicious, a Kṣatriya's be connected with power, and a Vaiśya's with wealth, but a Śūdra's (express something) contemptible (II, 31).

3. A Brāhmaṇa may confidently seize the goods of (his) Śūdra (slave); for, as that (slave) can have no property, his master may take his possessions (VIII, 417).

4. Let him not give to a Śūdra advice, nor the remnants (of his meal), nor food offered to the gods; nor let him explain the sacred law (to such a man), nor impose (upon him) a penance; for he who explains the sacred law (to a Śūdra) or dictates to him a penance, will sink together with that (man) into the hell (called) Asaṃvṛta (IV, 80-81).

5. A once-born man (a Śūdra), who insults a twice-born man with gross invective, shall have his tongue cut out; for he is of low origin (VIII, 270).

6. If he mentions the names and castes (jāti) of the (twice-born) with contumely, an iron nail, ten fingers long, shall be thrust red-hot into his mouth (VIII, 271).

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7. If he arrogantly teaches Brāhmaṇas their duty, the king shall cause hot oil to be poured into his mouth and ears (VIII, 272).

The Brahmins were always afraid that the Śūdras who were more than 90 percent of the population might revolt against them at any time. So they tried their best to keep them under control. One effective way was to treat them as slaves and keep them impoverished. In order to achieve this goal they took the cooperation of the king, who executed their ideas. Some of these rules are as follows.

8. The service of Brāhmaṇas alone is declared (to be) an excellent occupation for a Śūdra; for whatever else besides this he may perform will bear him no fruit (X, 123).

9. But to serve Brāhmaṇas (who are) learned in the Vēdas, householders, and famous (for virtue) is the highest duty of a Śūdra, which leads to beatitude (IX, 334).

10. A Śūdra, bought or unbought, must be compelled to do servile work; for he was created by the Svayambhū to be the slave of Brāhmaṇas. He may be emancipated by his master, but he is not emancipated from servitude . . . (VIII, 413-414).

11. The remnants of their food must be given to him, as well as their old clothes, the refuse of their grain, and their old household furniture (X, 125).

12. No collection of wealth must be made by a Śūdra, even though he be able (to do it); for a Śūdra who has acquired wealth, gives pain to Brāhmaṇas (X, 129).

13. A man of low caste who through covetousness lives by the occupations of a higher one, the king shall deprive of his property and banish (10, 96).

The Brahmins took all precautions to safeguard themselves and did not hesitate to deny the Śūdras the opportunity to have liberation (Mōkṣa). Manu had already declared that the Brahmins must not explain the sacred laws (dharma), nor impose penance on Śūdras. A Śūdra who was performing penance, so goes the story, was killed by Śrī Rāma,

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for defying Manu. But it was Bādarāyaṇa who in his *Brahmasūtras* (I, iii, 34-38) and the great commentators, Śaṅkara, Rāmānuja and Madhva that philosophically justified the denial. For example, Śaṅkara argues that Śūdras cannot have Mōkṣa, because they have no knowledge of Brahman (brahma-vidyā), which is a condition of Mōkṣa.

1. "The Śūdras cannot have claim to such knowledge on account of their not studying the Vēda. A person who has studied the Vēda and understood its sense is indeed qualified for Vēdic matters; but a Śūdra does not study the Vēda, for such study demands as its antecedent the upanayana-ceremony, and that ceremony belongs to the three (higher) castes only." (I.iii., 34)
2. "The Śūdras are not qualified for the reason also that Smṛti prohibits their hearing the Vēda, their studying the Vēda, and their understanding and performing Vēdic matters. The prohibition of hearing the Vēda is conveyed by the following passages: 'The ears of him who hears the Vēda are to be filled with (molten) lead and lac,' and 'For a Śūdra is (like) a cemetery, therefore (the Vēda) is not to be read in the vicinity of a Śūdra'. From this latter passage the prohibition of studying the Vēda results at once; for how should he study Scripture in whose vicinity it is not even to be read? There is, moreover, an express prohibition (of the Śūdras studying the Vēda). 'His tongue is to be slit if he pronounces it; his body is to be cut through if he preserves it'[8].
3. To show that Upanayana is a well established ceremony which qualifies a man to belong to the twice-born caste Śaṅkara quotes some scriptural passages.

So, birth as a Śūdra disqualifies a man to study the Vēdas and to attain Mōkṣa.

There was a still lower caste, called 'Pañcamas' (Fifth), 'Ati-śūdras', 'Cāṇḍālas', or 'Śvapacas'. They were declared untouchables and were forced to live outside the village in a

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separate colony and Manu declared that "the dwellings of Cāṇḍālas and Śvapacas shall be outside the village, they must use broken utensils, and their wealth (shall be) dogs and donkeys[9]; their dress (shall be) the garments of the dead, (they shall eat) their food from broken dishes, black iron (shall be) their ornaments, and they must always wander from place to place[10]. "A Caṇḍāla, a village pig, a cock, a dog and a menstruating woman" are such inauspicious things that they were prohibited from looking at the Brāhmaṇas while they were eating[11].

The Pañcamas were not allowed to draw water from the well meant for other castes. Either they had their own wells or some generous people had to pour water into their pots. When they entered the village they had to announce their arrival by shouting "sambōḷi, sambōḷi" ("please bear"); whenever they walked into the streets where the higher castes lived they had to tie a broom to their waist, so that as they walked forth the broom would erase their footprints; they should not spit on the street, for that would defile the street and make it unfit for others' walk. It is said that they had to hang an earthen pot around their neck into which they had to spit, if they had to spit.

There were protests against the Brahmin primacy which took the form of crude retaliation. One way to retaliate was to show the same repulsive attitude to Brahmins which Brahmins showed to the Śūdras. The *Basava-purāṇa* narrates three such incidents. 1. When Hāvinahāḷa Kallayya's servant-maid was fetching water, a Brahmin touched her and she immediately threw the earthen pot on the ground, went home, smeared herself with Vibhūti and fetched water in a new pot. This is meant to show that the touch of a Brahmin made the sevant maid impure. When the Brahmins brought this to the notice of Hāvinahāḷa Kallayya, he replied that they fell short of the definition that Brahmin is one who moves and acts in Brahman. 2. As a part of his debate with them he asked his dog to recite a part of a Vēda which the dog did flawlessly[12]. The narration of this incident was intended to show that reciting the Vēdas was

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neither a great act nor a prerogative of Brahmins, that even dogs of Liṅgāyat devotees could recite the Vēdas and that the Liṅgāyats could defy Manu's rule that the tongue of Śūdra should be cut if he recited the Vēdas. 3. A Brahmin, Sāmavēdi Appaṇṇa had the occult power of walking in the sky. One day while an untouchable Śiva-devotee was cooking dog's flesh to be offered to Śiva, he noticed Appaṇṇa moving in the sky. Lest Appaṇṇa's evil sight fall on the food, he covered the utensil with his footwear[13]. This was intended to show the Brahmins' inferiority to the Śūdra Śiva-devotee. 4. Kāḷavve, Uriliṅga Peddi's wife, says that if one sees a single Brahmin in the morning one will be reborn 84 lakh times as a pig, because the Brahmin having killed innumerable elephants, horses, goats, etc. in the four aeons as sacrifices to gods, has accumulated great sin[14]. There are also stories of the Vīraśaivas who refused to see, talk and deal with Brahmins for they were regarded as Bhavis.

Basavaṇṇa, however, knew that these crude retaliatory measures instead of solving the problem of caste discrimination would only aggravate it. He wanted to deal with the root of the problem, the evil socio-religious system that systematically exploited the lower castes. His chief intention was not to hurt Brahmins or Kṣatriyas, but to protect the lower castes from the ill treatment of the higher castes.

It is true that it was necessary for Basavaṇṇa to reject the Vēdic authority if he had to reject the Vēdic caste system. But at the same time, he had also realised that it was impossible to reform the Vēdic religion, for traditionalism and revolution did not go together. To stay in Hinduism and to ask his people to disobey the Manu-Laws was to ask for the impossible. So instead of reforming the old, irreparably dilapidated Vēdic society he just abandoned it in order to build new society based on new religion, called Liṅgāyatism, founded on a totally new set of doctrines.

In the path of construction of such a society the chief impediment was, in addition to the opposition from the

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conservative traditionalists, incurable ignorance of the people. The Vēdic people are wrongly believed to have divided the society into only four groups, Brahmins, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas and Śūdras; they had indeed divided society into more than thousand groups, knowingly or unknowingly. While Brahmins distinguished themselves into Vaiṣṇavas, Śaivas, Śāktas, etc. each having its own sectarian, territorial and other specifications, the Śūdras divided among themselves into thousand groups on the basis of professions, each caste claiming superiority over others.

Basavaṇṇa formulated a multi-phased plan to eradicate caste system. He offered the biological proof that all are born in the same manner and none is born in the ears. After birth all have passions, anger and other defects and none is exempt from them. If that is the case, how is the claim justified that one's caste is superior to others'[15]?

Basavaṇṇa proved the unjustifiability of the Vēdic way of identifying caste with profession. Recalling the early Vēdic stand of free choice of professions Basavaṇṇa argued that it was proper to say that we choose our professions after birth and improper to say that professions are determined by birth. By choosing the profession of Vēdic study one is called a Brahmin, by choosing the profession of washing clothes one is called a washerman[16]. He cited the instances of the past when people who belonged to what the post-Manu people called low castes, who became great sages. For example, Vyāsa was a mason, Agastya a black-smith, Dūrvāsa a cobbler and so on[17]. Our professions are not the standards of social status. Uriliṅga Peddi says that the treatment of Vēdic study and performance of Vēdic sacrifices as a nobler profession than the profession of an acrobat is unjustifiable as both are done for earning daily bread[18]. So Basavaṇṇa had taken a vow not to enquire about the profession of his followers when they came to his house[19].

In the next phase, Basavaṇṇa, contrary to the Vēdic Brahmins' claim to superiority, declared that he had abandoned his Brahmin caste. He had already, when he was a young rebel,

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torn off his sacred thread which in the eyes of all was a sign of superiority. Now to prove that he did not have superiority complex of a Brahmin or a minister he declared that he abandoned his caste in its entirety[20]. A Vēdic Brahmin could not think of sacrificing his caste, but Basavaṇṇa who had to attract people of lower castes did it without hesitation. Moreover, he made fun of Brahmins who, even after converting to Liṅgāyatism, continued to wear the sacred thread[21].

One may object that with the selfish motive of attracting people of lower castes to his new faith he abandoned Brahminism. But while it is true that he boldly and honestly said that he was not a Brahmin, we do not see any suggestion in his or others' Vacanas that he did so only in order to attract people to his faith, because his aim was to eradicate caste system rather than increasing the number of his followers. To prove this point we can cite his Vacanas which speak of his honesty and commitment to the aim. For example, he says,

> **The son of Cennayya's servant,**
> **The daughter of Kakkayya's maid –**
> **When they had illicit union**
> **I was born . . .**[22]

On many occasions he degraded himself as the son of untouchable Mādāra Cennayya[23] or as his grandson[24], or as relative of untouchables and Śūdras like Cennayya, Kakkayya, Śvapacayya, Dāsimayya, etc., or as the son of a mother who supplied water or as the brother of a sister who worked as cook in Śiva-devotees' houses[25] – all in order to show to his followers the false value attached to caste or profession. He was convinced that as long as people identified him with Vēdic Brahminism they would not come near him. However, if he attracted many followers, as he actually did, it was because he was a Brahmin, because if a man of low caste advised people to give up caste system, not only they would not listen to him, but also would attribute selfish motives to him. He became a model to other high caste people for abandoning high caste. Otherwise, the people of higher caste would not have become his followers.

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In the next phase of his mission he offered Iṣṭa-liṅga to all those who wanted to become his followers (Liṅgāyats) but insisted that they forget the castes to which they belonged earlier, because his intention was to construct a casteless society. As a result, the people of many of low castes, as well as those of high castes, including the Vaiṣṇavas and Jainas, became Liṅgāyats[26]. Earlier castes were water-tight compartments and marriage between them was unthinkable and was even considered a crime. But Basavaṇṇa openly defied this and brought all castes under one religion in order to demolish them. It was like many streams and rivers joining a sea only to lose their identity. All Liṅgāyats, he declared, are high caste (kulajas)[27] and equal. He accorded high status even to the untouchables if they wore Liṅga[28]. This helped him to convince his followers that if all are kulajas (superior castes) there is no scope for caste discrimination. The only standard for discrimination was Liṅga-wearing: whoever wore Liṅga, be he a Brahmin or Holeya, he was superior and anybody who fell below this, was inferior, be he a Brahmin or Holeya (untouchable).

Basavaṇṇa knew that mere offering Iṣṭa-liṅga to all did not eradicate caste discrimination – that was only a beginning and a necessity. Prior to Basavaṇṇa the Śaiva Guru who was a Brahmin used to offer Iṣṭa-liṅga to the Śaivas. But when he initiated the low caste Hindus he would not go to their houses and dine with them, but would get from them rice, cereals, coconuts, ghee, money, etc. as fees. Cennabasavaṇṇa calls such Gurus 'merchants who sell Liṅga'[29]. It is precisely for this reason that he framed the rule that those who have been already initiated by the Śaiva Gurus must once again be initiated by Liṅgāyat Guru[30]. If the Guru does not teach against caste discrimination or encourages it passively, the disciples and followers continue to follow casteism and their conversion is a waste.

Basavaṇṇa and Cennabasavaṇṇa had noticed with pain that the new Liṅgāyats co-dined but did not have marriage-relations[31]. Noticing this Basavaṇṇa began to mix frequently with the Śūdras and the untouchables and even dined with them. His unrestricted and frequent mixing with them was anti-Vēdism

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in the eyes of traditionalists. He went to the extent of dining with the untouchables in their houses. In the *Basava-purāṇa* an incident of Basavaṇṇa visiting the colony of untouchables and eating food in the untouchable Śivanāgimayya's house is narrated. When his visit is reported by the Brahmin ministers to the king, the latter is displeased with Basavaṇṇa. Lest Basavaṇṇa defile the palace, the king met him in the front yard of the palace. Basavaṇṇa argued that he visited a Śiva-devotee's (Liṅgāyat's) house and not an untouchables' and Liṅgāyats had no caste system and therefore, his visit was within the bounds of Liṅgāyatism[32]. The king and the traditionalists were not convinced. Perhaps because of many incidents of this kind the king's displeasure had accumulated.

Basavaṇṇa realised that the best way to wipe out the caste discrimination and establish equality of all was to arrange marriage between people of different castes. If he had children he would have been the first example. But the only son he had had died very young. So he arranged marriage between close followers, the son of Haraḷayya and and the daughter of Madhuvarasa. The former was an untouchable and the latter was a Brahmin, before they converted to Liṅgāyatism. Since they were already Liṅgāyats they were free from the charge of violating the Vēdic law of caste-mixing (Varṇa-saṅkara). But those who were jealous of Basavaṇṇa's growing popularity got a new and powerful weapon to get him punished by the king. At the same time the king's enemies were waiting to usurp the throne. When the marriage actually took place, the evil traditionalists advised the king that doomsday had come and persons concerned must be severely punished so that things of this kind would not repeat. Basavaṇṇa had earlier displeased the king many times. Now he displeased him deeply. When the king enquired about the unlawful marriage, Basavaṇṇa argued that it was not a Vēdic (Hindu) marriage, but a marriage between two Liṅgāyats and that he had not violated the Vēdic law of crossing of castes. But the argument fell on deaf ears. The king awarded the severest punishment to Madhuvarasa and

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Haraḷayya[33]. They were dragged by the elephants along the roads till their death. Basavaṇṇa was exiled and his followers were driven out or killed. Some could flee the city with bundles of Vacanas. A couple of enemies of Bijjaḷa killed the king. Some Śaraṇas were killed but their spirit survived.

2. WOMEN

Though the condition of women was not as bad as that of the Śūdras and Pañcamas the general trend of the Vēdic culture was not favourable to them. Vēdic philosophy advised that those who wanted to advance in the spiritual path had to renounce women, wealth and land, women especially, who were the greatest impediments in the spiritual path of men. For example, when Indra was afraid that he would lose his position to Viśvāmitra who was performing penance he sent a beautiful damsel to disturb his penance, thus making him ineligible for his position. The Vēdic culture has given a despicable label to woman, 'Māyā' ('temptress'). Even the post-Basava Vacana literature is replete with reference to women as Māya. Akka Mahādēvi, herself a great Yōgini, has admitted that the desire for the other sex is so ubiquitous that even for a Yogi Yogini is Māyā and for a Sàvaṇa (Jaina masculine monk) a Savaṇi (Jaina feminine monk) is Māyā[34], the deluding force that distracted the seers from their spiritual path. Therefore, the spiritual tradition of India had as much contempt for women as for illusion (ignorance or temptation). One may object that the Vēdic sages lived in forests with their wives without considering them as temptresses. The great sage Vaśiṣṭha lived with his wife Arundhati and Gautama with his wife Ahalya. In reply it can be said that once these sages entered ascetic (sannyāsa) life they had to send back their wives to their villages.

Many scholars quote the examples of Gārgi, Maitrēyi and other women to prove that Vēdic culture had granted enormous freedom to women. Unfortunately, a conversation between Gārgi and her husband, Yājñavalkya, reveals the limited boundary of freedom accorded to them. When Gārgi continued to question her husband about Brahman he warned

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her, "If your head should not be separated from your shoulders, you should not question further"[35]. So we should reconsider our claim that women enjoyed spiritual freedom.

Even if we admit for the sake of argument that women of the Vēdic times enjoyed spiritual freedom, it seems, Manu and other Smṛti writers deprived them of it. Manu declared that *a woman is never fit for independence*[36]; "day and night woman must be kept in dependence by the males (of) their (families), and, if they attach themselves to sensual enjoyments, they must be kept under one's control"[37]; "her father protects (her) in childhood, her husband protects (her) in youth, and her sons protect (her) in old age"[38]. "Women must particularly be guarded against evil inclinations, however trifling (they may appear); for, if they are not guarded, they will bring sorrow on two families"[39].

Though there is no textual evidence to the claim that the Vēdic culture had denied women the right to perform the Vēdic sacrifices and rituals, the Brahmins in actuality had denied women that right. Perhaps, they extended the argument of Bādarāyaṇa that women cannot wear sacred thread, study the Vēdas, possess knowledge of Brahman and attain Mōkṣa. They placed all women on par with the Śūdras.

Similarly, the Jainas denied Nirvāṇa (Mōkṣa) to women and argued that if a woman acquires sufficient puṇya (religious merit) in this life, she will be born as a man in the next birth and may become eligible for Nirvāṇa if he undergoes proper spiritual discipline.

Contrary to this, Basavaṇṇa and other Śaraṇas hold that Mōkṣa is possible not only for the three upper castes, but to Śūdras and Pañcamas and not only for men, but for women as well. In order to make them eligible for Mōkṣa they made arrangements for offering Iṣṭa-liṅga to all those who wanted to become Liṅgāyats, including women, Śūdras and Pañcamas. Iṣṭa-liṅga was the bull-dozer which levelled all social ups and downs[40].

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Another important development in the Śaraṇas' thinking about women is that women are not Māyā or impediment in the spiritual path of men. Allama Prabhu argues what impedes our spiritual progress is neither wealth nor woman, but the desire for them. He says,

They say gold is Māyā, but gold is not Māyā;
They say woman is Māyā, but woman is not Māyā;
They say land is Māyā, but land is not Māyā;
What is Māyā is the desire that lingers in mind ...[41]

There is some psychological truth in what Allama Prabhu says. Desire for woman is common and natural for a healthy man. Till that desire is fulfilled it lingers in and haunts the mind always. It appears and reappears like waves, at the time of worship, meditation, listening to the Guru's discourses, etc. In this sense it is Māyā; it haunts man as woman and woman as man. Allama says that if we suppress the sexual desire or keep away from women the desired result does not occur. We have to overcome the sexual desire.

According to the 12th century Śaraṇas, we can overcome the desire in two ways. One way is to fulfil the desire in proper ways. Siddharāma suggests,

If a Bhakta's mind is caught in a woman
He should get her married and unite with her.
If his mind is caught in land
He should buy it and build a house . . .[42]

It should be noted that Siddharāma does not suggest that man should suppress sexual desire or should go to forest so that he is not tempted by her. A similar advice is given by Basavaṇṇa but with a justification.

If we suppress the senses the defects torment us;
The five senses appear before us and torment us;
Did Siriyāḷa and Ceṅgaḷe renounce conjugal bliss?
Did Sindhu Ballāḷa renounce conjugal enjoyment?[43]

Basavaṇṇa's advice reveals three psychological truths. 1. If we suppress the sexual desire it, instead of being annihilated, haunts us repeatedly and, instead of helping only

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hinders our spiritual progress. 2. The suppression of sexual desire may lead to many physical and mental diseases. Or the seeker may take to immoral or unnatural way. This distracts him from the goal and makes him ineligible for spiritual training. 3. Siriyāḷa, Sindhu Baḷlāḷa and other great Śiva-devotees did not teach us to sacrifice conjugal life for spiritual life, because they strongly believed that devotion to Śiva was not in any way hindered by conjugal life. In fact, if they ever kept away from their wives assuming that they were Māyā, they would have been haunted by Māyā.

Jēḍara Dāsimayya, another Śaraṇa, comes up with another, more powerful argument. He says,

Śiva is pleased with devotion
Offered jointly by husband and wife;
If the devotion is not jointly offered,
It is like mixing poison with nectar . . .[44]

Allama Prabhu says that just as two eyes collectively produce one sight, Liṅga approves of devotion offered jointly by husband and wife[45]. Both Allama and Dāsimayya want to prove that if an unmarried man has in his mind sexual desire at times and God at other times, it means that his mind is not fully devoted to worship, meditation, etc. and they are mere appearances, not real acts; the devotion offered by husband and wife who are not haunted by sexual desire is better. In this sense, therefore, according to Śaraṇas, conjugal life is conducive, not obstructive, to spiritual discipline.

Another significant development in the Liṅgāyat attitude is the freedom of expression given to women. This development has flown in two directions. 1. The Vēdic culture had denied education to Śūdras and Pañcamas so that they could not read what the Brahmins had written and could not write against the Vēdic culture. But once men and women of low castes became Liṅgāyats they could compose Vacanas in Kannada and express their thoughts freely. Most of the Vacana-composers of the twelfth century belonged to low castes and more than 30 of

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them were women. History has not recorded any development comparable to it in other parts of the world including India. These women could compose Vacanas not only about God, soul, devotion, etc. but also about their opposition to Vēdic culture. For the first time in the history of India women could demand equality with men. Like Jēḍara Dāsimayya and the Ferryman Cauḍayya, Goggavve asks,

> **If breasts and hair appear the being is called woman;**
> **If moustaches appear the being is called man.**
> **But the consciousness that is in both -**
> **Is it masculine or feminine? . . .**[46]

Her argument is supported by two more women Vacana composers, Lakkamma and Satyakka. Another woman, the wife of Gajēśa Masaṇayya, poses the important question:

> **They say that Liṅga should be appeased**
> **By renouncing woman;**
> **Why? Is there an opposition between woman and Liṅga?**[47]

Perhaps a woman of pre-Basava Vēdic culture would not have the audacity to ask this question.

2. The low caste women who became Liṅgāyats could participate in the discussion that took place in Anubhava Maṇṭapa under the presidentship of Allama Prabhu. Lakkamma had the courage to remind her husband of his duty[48] and to object to his greed[49]. Muktāyakka had the courage of charging Allama Prabhu that he had not yet attained liberation, talked more than necessary and suffered from egoism[50]. Though she was wrong in her argument nobody threatened her for countering Allama.

3. THE TWIN DOCTRINE OF KĀYAKA-DASŌHA

The word 'Kāyaka', derived from the Sanskṛit term 'Kāya' ('body'), means a profession involving bodily effort. However, in Liṅgāyat context it encompasses other kinds of profession also like writing, trading, maintenance of account, etc. Everybody should do some Kāyaka or other.

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The Kannada word 'Dāsōha' is derived from a complex of two Sanskrit words, 'dāsa' ('servant') and 'ahaṃ' ('I'), meaning 'I am servant' ('dāsōhaṃ'). The Kannada word really means that a Bhakta should do selfless service to his family or community or society with the spirit of a servant. A farm labourer, for example, should think that all the produce belongs to his master for whom he works and he has no claim in the share. Similarly, when the Bhakta is gifting things like food grains, he should think that God is the greatest giver[51] and he is only a distributor. Jēḍara Dāsimayya warns that when land, crops, oxen, seeds, etc. are the gifts of Liṅga, flattering humans who donate them is foolish. Humans only exploit nature and distribute the profit among themselves[52] and the giver who is arrogant or selfish in giving will be punished by Śiva[53]. The word 'Dāsōha' which in the beginning meant community dining, over the centuries has come to mean donating food, food grains, books, money, etc.

Though all professions were primarily performed for livelihood, Basavaṇṇa and his disciples advised his followers to perform them for the purpose of Dāsōha. Thus a distinction is made between a profession which is meant only for livelihood and Kāyaka which is done both for livelihood and Dāsōha. In the first sense profession is selfish and worldly and in the second sense it is altruistic and spiritual. A Kāyaka is no Kāyaka if it does not involve Dāsōha.

The twin doctrine of Kāyaka-Dāsōha is associated with Liṅgāyatism very deeply, such that as soon as one hears the name of Kāyaka-Dāsōha, one is bound to remind oneself of Liṅgāyatism. Basavaṇṇa, perhaps, had thought that Kāyaka-Dāsōha was the most suitable way of Mōkṣa for his followers, as most of them were weavers, potters, farm labourers, cobblers, etc. These workers did not have the facility of devoting separate time and space for worship, etc. as those who had renounced the world had. Basavaṇṇa asked them to regard their profession itself as identical to worship. As a result, the spiritual life of a Liṅgāyat is regarded as incomplete without Kāyaka-Dāsōha.

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Uriliṅga Peddi recognises four grades of Dāsōha. Doing Dāsōha thinking that Śiva is both giver and receiver is of the highest kind. And this is possible only for the mystics. Doing Dāsōha with steadfast devotion and without any reservation is the second; doing Dāsōha to the nearest and friends is the third; giving whatever is possible for one is the last. But nobody should shirk the responsibility of doing Dāsōha. One who does not do Dāsōha has no liberation[54].

Śaraṇas have laid down certain rules for a profession to be called Kāyaka.

1. In the traditional Vēdic (Hindu) system, the profession of a Brahmin, study and teaching of the Vēdas, performing of Vēdic sacrifice and rituals, was considered superior to professions like agriculture, animal husbandry, etc. Selling food grains, the profession of a Vaiśya, was higher than the profession of growing them, the profession of a Śūdra. For this reason Brahmin was considered the most superior, followed by Kṣatriya (ruling) and Vaiśya (farming and trade). Śūdra, who served all these higher castes, was the lowest. He worked as a labourer in the farm of a Vaiśya, as a soldier for the king and as a domestic servant in the houses of all the higher castes. According to Manu, Śūdra had no right to property and had to live on the mercy of his masters. Contrary to this, the Śaraṇas held that no Kāyaka was superior or inferior.

According to the Vēdic tradition, profession determined caste. That means that only the sons born in the family (caste) of Brahmins should do sacrifices and rituals, only those born in the family of potters should to pottery, and so on. Since birth in a family (jāti) and profession were interlinked, change of profession meant change of caste which in principle was impossible. Lord Kṛṣṇa declared that if a low-born performs the duty of a high-born he is certainly cast into hell[55]. Though a Śūdra could learn and teach the Vēdas and perform the Vēdic sacrifices and rituals in a better way than a Brahmin could, tradition prohibited him from doing so. In the *Bhagavadgītā* Kṛṣṇa declares[56] that it is better to stick to one's own profession,

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though one does it imperfectly than to do other's profession which he can do perfectly.

The birth of Liṅgāyatism was intended to eradicate all discrimination based on caste, birth, profession, sex, etc. Uriliṅga Peddi argues that if both an acrobat and a Brahmin perform their professions for livelihood, there should be no reason to regard the latter's profession as superior to the former's[57]. That is why Basavaṇṇa had taken a vow not to enquire about the Liṅga-wearer's profession who visited him[58]. He even asked his followers not to feel ashamed of their low caste and advised them to reply boldly that theirs was as high a caste as that of Mādāra Cennayya who did an honest Kāyaka[59]. Though he did not advise his followers to change their professions he certainly asked them not to discriminate between them. In fact, when he was charged that he could perform Dāsōha daily because he was a minister to Bijjaḷa, he replied that he was ready to work even as a servant in the house of a Holeya for the sake of doing Dāsōha to Guru and Jaṅgama and that for him Kāyaka was not a means of earning his daily bread[60]. From this it follows that by definition all Kāyakas are valuable provided a part of the income is used for Dāsōha[61] and none is high or low. No discrimination should be made between Dāsōha-oriented Kāyakas[62].

2. If the agent regards his profession as low, monotonous or less profitable, or is unwilling to part with a portion of his income for Dāsōha there is a chance of his interest being diminished in his profession. Basavaṇṇa who noticed this kind of psychology in some agents said that just as a Kāyaka is no Kāyaka if it is devoid of the intention of doing Dāsōha, so it is no Kāyaka if it is devoid of interest or zeal. He condemns the attitude of people who work or give unwillingly. If their real intention is to give with the spirit of a servant Śiva joins them[63], but if one is arrogant or selfish or reluctant in giving Śiva haunts them[64]. Āydakki Mārayya, a Śaraṇa, says that if one is immersed in Kāyaka he should ignore the presence of Guru and Jaṅgama and even the worship of Liṅga[65]. For this stand of Mārayya there may be two reasons. His reason is that Kāyaka is a

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spiritual profession because it aims at Dāsōha and is as good as respecting Guru and Jaṅgama and worshipping Liṅga.

In the *Śūnya-sampādane* an incident related to Kāyaka-Dāsōha is narrated. Candayya's profession is rope making out of reeds. One day while he is cutting reeds which had grown in the stream and on its banks, his Iṣṭa-liṅga falls into the stream. Candayya, though aware of it continues to work and in the evening starts returning home without picking up his Iṣṭa-liṅga. The Iṣṭa-liṅga takes a human form, reminds him of Iṣṭa-liṅga, runs after him and requests him to take him as his servant. Candayya allots him the duty of selling the ropes he makes. One day the servant brings more money than the reasonable price of the ropes. But Candayya chides him for his greed and asks him to return the excess money to the buyer[66]. The narration, however, involves exaggeration; but it intends to drive home these points: that work is more important than wearing or worshipping Iṣṭa-liṅga; that even Liṅga in the human form should work and that nobody should sell things for undue profit, even if it is for Dāsōha.

In fact, the statement of Candayya and Āydakki Mārayya intends to reveal the truth that the more a man loses himself in doing his Kāyaka-Dāsōha the more he is free from selfishness and I-sense which are the greatest impediments in spiritual path.

3. Dāsōha should be backed by an honest and harmless Kāyaka. A labourer who wants to do Dāsōha must not demand more wages than he deserves[67]; on the one hand, Liṅga does not approve of it and on the other, such a work ceases to be Kāyaka. If he demands less, it is a sign of unselfishness. Nor should we beg money or materials to be spent in Dāsōha[68]. Earning money by immoral means in order to spend for Dāsōha is not allowed[69]. The reason is twofold – the giver has no affinity to the money which he has not earned and therefore, it is not *his* and by begging or stealing it or demanding more wages than one deserves or earning immorally the doer is hurting others.

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4. Ādayya, another prominent Śaraṇa, has taken the vow that even if he finds somebody's money, cloth and any valuable thing on his way he will not pick them up and use them for Dāsōha[70]. Because, they are not *his* possessions; and he would not receive them even if they are given free, because one should not receive anything that does not come from Kāyaka. Receiving such things is as immoral as casting lustful eye on other's wife.

5. Kāyaka must not be done for hoarding. The real Bhakta does not worry about the next meal. He should always trust that God offers him Kāyaka everyday and should receive the benefits *collectively* and enjoy it as Prasāda[71]. Hoarding implies greed and greed is contrary to Kāyaka.

6. Liṅgāyatism rejects the traditional theory that Karma (Kāyaka) is different from and supplementary to, Bhakti (devotion) and that Bhakti and Karma can be practised at different times, because that would mean choice of one is indifference to the other. Āydakki Mārayya says that such a choice keeps him away from the highest goal. When he insists that one do Kāyaka till one's last breath[72] Allama Prabhu points out that in that case he is left with no time for uniting with Liṅga[73] and advises him to realise the Absolute while doing Kāyaka for Dāsōha[74].

7. While a discussion about Kāyaka-Dāsōha is going on in the Anubhava Maṇṭapa Lakkamma reminds her husband, Āydakki Mārayya, of his Kāyaka of bringing rice from Śaraṇas' houses. By mistake he brings more than necessary. His wife asks him promptly to return the excess. The message in her attitude is that we must desist from the desire of having more rice just because it is available free. She also points out that while doing Kāyaka one must not think of Kailāsa, the reward; because Kailāsa is not a wage for the Dāsōha that one does[75]. The basis of Dāsōha must be the philosophical doctrine that the doer, Prasāda, God and others are one.

Even before Basavaṇṇa the concept of Dāsōha had gained importance but without the value that Śaraṇas accorded

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to it. According to Bhīma Kavi[76], Bommayya's profession was burgling non-Śiva devotees' houses (but if he noticed that the house he was burgling belonged to Śiva-devotee, he would wake up the owner, receive Prasāda from him and leave without burgling). For Telugu Jommayya, hunting the animals and selling their flesh was Kāyaka[77]. Both used the money for feeding Jaṅgamas. Basavaṇṇa insists that any profession that harms others is not Kāyaka. Stealing money is as bad as killing animals. When charged with the allegation of siphoning the royal treasury for Dāsōha, Basavaṇṇa replied that when there is stream of milk flowing in front of his house why should he go in for a small cow[78]? What he meant was that he had plenty of money with him as he was successor to his wife's father who was a minister. Also perhaps those who participated in Dāsōha contributed their own share.

The twin doctrine of Kāyaka-Dāsōha is simultaneously worldly and spiritual, worldly because it provides daily bread to the agent and spiritual because it is done in the spirit of worship. In fact, treating Kāyaka-Dāsōha as a way to Mōkṣa was not accidental – Basavaṇṇa's followers *had intentionally* raised it to the level of worship or spiritual act. The reason is this. 1. Bādarāyaṇa in his *Brahmasūtras* (I.iii.34-38) resolves that the Śūdras cannot have Mōkṣa because they have no Brahma-vidyā (knowledge of Brahman) which comes from the Vēdic study and they cannot study the Vēdas because their caste prevents them from wearing the sacred thread, a precondition for the Vēdic study; 2. Tradition had recognised many ways to Mōkṣa, the most important being Jñāna-yōga, Bhakti-yōga, Karma-yōga and Pātañjala-yōga. Since most of Basavaṇṇa's followers were farm labourers, weavers, potters, masons and other menial workers, they could not be asked to follow the path of Jñāna, for that would involve the study of scriptures and being unlettered and Śūdras, they would not choose that way. Nor could they follow the path of Pātañjala-yōga for that would require long, laborious and regular practice of Yōga for which they had no time. Perhaps Basavaṇṇa found fault with the principle of Karma-yōga for it meant only

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sacrificing the fruit of action to God, but not actual Dāsōha for the have-nots. Basavaṇṇa's path of Bhakti included Kāyaka-Dāsōha. That is, either the Bhakta in addition to devotion could practise Kāyaka or being a worker he could practise devotion in the form of Kāyaka. In fact, the latter was more feasible for him. Kāyaka is the act in which God exists. Just as we worship a symbol as if it is God, so also we should worship our Kāyaka, i.e., pay attention to work, as if it is God. Only such a Kāyaka-Dāsōha deserves to be called spiritual. Whether in ruling or farming, whether in studying the Vēdas or in trading or writing, we should be free from dishonesty. Such profession invites Śiva, it is a place of Śiva, or Liṅga himself[79]. Āydakki Mārayya says that to experience Liṅga Dāsōha to Jaṅgama is essential[80]. In fact, all Kāyakas which are no less than spiritual acts are the same. Gaṅgamma, a woman Vacana-composer, compares them to religious vows, rightly. All Kāyakas, like vows, aim at sanctifying us[81]. Similarly, another Vacanakāra says that just as cows of different hues yield white milk, so the different Kāyakas lead us to union with Liṅga through Dāsōha[82].

While worshipping in temples was the profession of the priests, the Śaraṇas regarded profession as a sort of worship. While the Vēdic tradition had regarded Brahmins' profession as higher than menial professions of the Śūdras and the untouchables, the Śaraṇas raised all professions to the height of worship. This attitude towards Kāyaka is summed up in the famous maxim "Kāyakavē Kailāsa" (Kāyaka is itself heaven). It means that Kāyaka is not a way to Kailāsa, but is Kailāsa itself. That is, to attain a position in Kailāsa, one need not die, but can attain the same result even while alive.

Perhaps Basavaṇṇa wanted to construct Liṅgāyat community on the model of a family by means of the Kāyaka-Dāsōha doctrine. In a family no member is more or less eligible for the benefits of family's earning. In the ideal Liṅgāyat community co-existence and co-operation are based on love and compassion. A member earns not only for himself but for others of the family also. This is evidenced by the fact that all Liṅgāyats had developed the practice of addressing one another

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as 'aṇṇa' (elder brother), 'tamma' (younger brother), 'akka' (elder sister), 'taṅgi' (younger sister), 'amma' or 'avva' or 'tāyi' (mother) 'appa' or 'tande' (father), etc. It is not a sign of respect but a sign of affection or close affinity. Every proper name included prefixes or suffixes like 'aṇṇa' (e.g., Basavaṇṇa), 'akka' (e.g., Akka Mahādēvi), 'tande' (e.g., Arivina Māritande),' Amma' (e.g., Lakkamma) and the like. Addressing members of other families than one's own either by mere Akka, Aṇṇa, or by names with suffixes or prefixes was a sign of close relation.

We should note that God has given us land, bullocks, seeds, rains, etc. Therefore, it is left to our choice to regard everything as Prasāda and distribute it among ourselves or to hoard it greedily. In fact, since Prasāda belongs to everybody we have to acquire just enough for our survival and we have no right to grab more for the purpose of hoarding. The excess should be distributed among the have-nots.

As we have noted earlier, for a Liṅgāyat devotion is not restricted to worship of Iṣṭa-liṅga, eating Prasāda or meditation, but, in addition to these, includes a social life based on the two philosophical doctrines, the doctrine of identity of the immovable and the movable and the doctrine that real religion consists in compassion. The first doctrine, it can be recalled, means that while the universal soul (Liṅga) is omnipresent and, therefore, immovable, the living beings, consisting of the same in the form of individual souls are moving Liṅgas (Jaṅgamas). The two are essentially the same. The second doctrine means that religion consists not merely in worship of the immovable, chanting of Mantras, eating Prasāda, etc., but in showing compassion to all the mobile Liṅgas.

In fact, the two doctrines formulated by Basavaṇṇa reveal the limitations of the traditional Vēdic religion. Basavaṇṇa argues that just as a tree exudes with fresh leaves, flowers and fruits when its roots are watered, so God is pleased when the moving Liṅgas, which are his different forms, are fed or pleased. He goes to the extent of declaring that worshipping Liṅga is insignificant compared to the feeding of Jaṅgamas.

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Offering milk to the stone image of snake but killing a living snake shows our ignorance and violation of the two doctrines. The principle that motivates a Liṅgāyat's life should be that of welfare of all living beings (sakala jīvātmarige lēsanē bayasuvudu). This motivation is expressed, in social morality and in the twin doctrine of Kāyaka-Dāsōha.

Though a Śaraṇa should not have selfishness or arrogance, he should maintain self-respect. He must not lose it by begging. God does not approve of begging[83]. Mārayya condemned the practice of some caste Jaṅgamas who begged gold, etc. from the Bhaktas[84]. Basavaṇṇa insisted that even Jaṅgamas should not beg and should engage in the Kāyaka of reforming people religiously and morally on the lines he prescribed. It is noteworthy that even Rēvaṇasiddha, a great saint, performed the Kāyaka of supplying water to the Śiva-Śaraṇas without thinking for a while that his Kāyaka was lower or higher[85].

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN CHARITY (DĀNA) AND DĀSŌHA

One may argue that the concept of Dāsōha is already mentioned in the ancient Sanskrit texts under the name 'Dāna' (charity) and the Vacanakāras are only repeating it in Kannada. Similarly, one may object that the concept Kāyaka-Dāsōha is not new and it was taught in the *Bhagavadgītā* long ago. In reply it can be said that there is a difference between Dāna and Dāsōha, on the one hand, and between Dāsōha and Niṣkāma-Karma of the *Bhagavadgītā*, on the other, as shown under.

1. Normally one does not get charity (dāna) unless one begs. But Basavaṇṇa has clearly instructed his followers that nobody, not even Jaṅgama, should beg.

2. Anybody can give charity: any sinner, like a virtuous man, can give charity. It is said in the Śāstras that certain things should be given as gifts to get rid of certain kind of sin. But money used in Dāsōha must not be earned by immoral means. In other words, the sinner's money or things must not be used for Dāsōha. As Basavaṇṇa says, the sinner's money is fit only for repentence[86].

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3. Dāna can be done for the sake of fame and other selfish motives. Many do not donate except for fame. However, Dāsōha must not be done for any selfish purpose. Lakkamma objects to doing Kāyaka-Dāsōha in the hope of going to Kailāsa, because Kailāsa is not a wage for doing Kāyaka-Dāsōha. Some Liṅgāyats, however, do Dāsōha for the sake of fame. It is also a fact that some engineers, doctors, merchants, etc. spend their ill-gotten money for Dāsōha. This, in principle, is against what Basavaṇṇa said. However, some of them may repent and donate their money or wealth for the public use. Since a repenting heart is a pure heart their money or wealth so donated may be used for Dāsōha. But their gift earned immorally for the purpose of Dāsōha must not be used for Dāsōha.
4. One who donates may be proud of his charity. However, Dāsōha must be performed with a sense of service and must be free from selfishness and egoism. There are many stone inscriptions which praise people who donate money or land for the maintenance of temples and priests. Basavaṇṇa disapproves of such boastful acts, as also donation for the maintenance of temples and priests, as neither of them involves compassion. Dāsōha must be done for living beings out of compassion. In his view a small amount of money donated to a poor student out of compassion has a higher moral value than donating a diamond studded crown to a temple.
5. In charity the receiver may feel ashamed or develop inferiority complex. But in Dāsōha the receiver must not develop that complex. He should think that he is getting what the Great Giver (Mahādāni, that is, Śiva) is giving, i.e. Prasāda. Man does not produce anything; he just exploits nature and distributes what God has produced.
6. While one who gives donation thinks dualistically that he is different from the gift and God, the Dāsōhi thinks that the receiver, God and the gift are one.

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If there are professions whose end is not Dāsōha, then they have no moral value. For example, the study of the Vēdas and performance of sacrifices for selfish purposes are unproductive and therefore, have no value. If Kāyaka of an acrobat which includes Dāsōha is the best, then why should we rate study of the Vēdas as higher than acrobatics? Even the worship in temples done by priests has no value as it is selfish, unproductive and does not include the spirit of Dāsōha. Nuliya Candayya says that one has to ignore long and elaborate worship as it and Kāyaka do not go together[87]. In fact, his basic question is, why do you need worship and religious merit (puṇya) if you are performing Kāyaka?[88].

Kāyaka is better than selfless action (niṣkāma-Karma) according to which, everybody should work and renounce the reward. Firstly, while it looks great as an ideal, it is hardly practicable, because it is natural for all to expect reward for their work. While Niṣkāma-karma which is selfless and unprofitable work is a means to lose selfishness and attain an otherworldly and spiritual reward, Mōkṣa, the agent of the Kāyaka-Dāsōha wants a worldly and material reward. To that extent Kāyaka-Dāsōha is not unselfish, because the doer wants the result now and here. He cannot renounce the reward in the name of God because he, being poor, needs it for his maintenance and for the have-nots. By doing unselfish work one can at best sanctify himself, but that is only a selfish motive and the society is not benefitted in the least. However, by doing Kāyaka-Dāsōha one can sanctify himself as well as satisfy the have-nots. If the principle of Niṣkāma-karma included the aim of satisfying the have-nots, it would not be different from Kāyaka-Dāsōha. Seen from this angle, earning more for the sake of the have-nots should not be considered as selfish.

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CHAPTER TWELVE:

LIṄGĀYATISM AND VĪRAŚAIVISM

'Liṅgāyatism or Vīraśaivism' or 'Liṅgāyatism and Vīraśaivism'?

It is certain that we do not have pre-Basava writings about Liṅgāyatism or Vīraśaivism. For an authentic account of metaphysics, ethics, religion and social philosophy of Liṅgāyatism we have to depend on the Kannada Vacanas composed by Basavaṇṇa and his colleagues. We do not come across the name 'Vīraśaiva' in them, but we do come across, though not very frequently, the names 'Liṅgāyata' and 'Liṅgavanta' as a nomenclature of the follower of the new religion. The Vacanakāras have widely used words 'Bhakta' and 'Śaraṇa' in their Vacanas to distinguish themselves from 'Bhavi' (non-Liṅgāyat), just as 'Kafir' and 'Heathen' are used to denote non-Muslim and non-Christian, respectively. Many a time the new religion is designated by the Vacanakāras and the Kannada poets of 13th and later centuries, by names such as 'Śiva-dharma', 'Śiva-samaya', 'Śiva-bhakti' and 'Śivācāra'. But even these terms are not distinctive names of the new faith, as they denoted any Śaiva sect, such as Tamil Śaivism, Kashmir Śaivism, Pāśupata, etc. In fact, Cennabasavaṇṇa calls the followers of Śaivism 'Bhavi-śaivas', 'Śaiva-karmis', meaning the religion founded by Basavaṇṇa was distinct from the other forms of Śiva-faith.

The name 'Liṅgāyata' derives from the Sanskrit root 'Liṅga' + 'āyata' ('one who receives') and means 'one who receives Iṣṭa-liṅga in a formal initiation ritual'; the name 'Liṅgavanta' means one who possesses Iṣṭa-liṅga. Very rarely the word 'Liṅga-dhāri' ('one who wears Liṅga) is also used as a synonym. These

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alternative names, therefore, seem to appropriately signify the new religion.

It seems some 100 years or so prior to Basava the Śaivas of Tamil Nadu and Karnataka faced stiff opposition from Jainas and Viṣṇavas. Their rivalry with them was so widespread, so deep and so fierce, it is said, that Rāmānuja had to flee Tamil Nadu to settle in Melkote in Karnataka temporarily. Harihara (A.D.1250) has written stories about the heroes (vīras) extolling their valiant fights against the non-Śaiva enemies. He calls them 'Vīra Śaraṇas', 'Vīra Bhaktas' and 'Vīra Māhēśvaras', where the prefix 'vīra' means 'hero' or 'valiant'. For example, in his narration of the story of Māruḍige Nācitande he uses the word 'vīra' in the sense of 'hero'[1] [in response to this, the Vaiṣṇavas who were engaged in fighting the Śaivas called themselves Vīra Vaiṣṇavas (Valiant Vaiṣṇavas)]. He and his heroic friends worship 'vīra Śiva-liṅga' and their devotion to Liṅga is 'vīra bhakti' ('heroic devotion'). Nācitande exhibits his heroism in eliminating the Jainas from his village, Māruḍige. Pālkurike Sōmanātha (A.D.1275) in his Telugu *Basava-purāṇamu* uses the name 'Vīra-māhēśvaras' to describe the same heroes. But Bhīma (A.D.1368) who claims that his *Basava-purāṇa* is a Kannada translation of Sōmanātha's *Basava-purāṇamu*, translates the word 'Vīra-māhēśvara' as 'Vīra-śaiva'. Thenceforth, the name 'Vīraśaiva' seems to have endeared itself to the Vacanakāras, Kannada poets and Sanskrit writers of later times and has been used as a synonym of 'Liṅgāyat'. The *Siddhānta-śikhāmaṇī*, for example, uses the name 'Vīraśaiva' to denote follower of Vīraśaivism. Its author even tries to justify its use etymologically. According to his etymology, the syllable 'vi' stands for vidyā or knowledge and the syllable 'ra' stands for revelling. The two syllables together mean that Vīraśaiva is one who is lost in the ecstasy of knowledge (Parabrahman). Professor S. N. Dasgupta rejects this fanciful etymology on the ground that in such a case the word should be 'vira', not 'vīra' and that it applies to all those who love knowledge, for example, the Vēdāntins, not merely to the Vīraśaivas[2]. In addition to

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this, we can object that if 'vīra' refers to a Vīraśaiva, then the suffix 'Śaiva' is redundant.

The word 'vīra' is also often used as an epithet of Liṅgāyat devotee of the the Mahēśvara-sthala, the second stage of of spiritual journey. But the epithet has nothing to do with valiant fight with non-Liṅgāyats. The devotee is vīra (hero) because his devotion to Śiva is steadfast and does not loosen it or give it up at any cost. However, the later Vacanakāras and some poets used the name 'Vīraśaiva' as a synonym of 'Liṅgāyata' and not as 'militant' or 'valiant' Śaiva.

As long as 'Vīraśaivism' was used as a synonym of 'Liṅgāyatism' one had no objection. But when some section of Liṅgāyats began to hold Vīraśaivism of the corrupt Āgamas and the *Śrīkara-bhāṣya* as the real Liṅgāyatism and as prevalent before Basava, there arose an unprecedented urgency to distinguish Liṅgāyatism enshrined in Vacanas of the 12th century from Vīraśaivism of fake Sanskrit works. While the Vacana-composers of the fifteenth and later centuries use the two words as synonyms, the authors of fabricated Āgamas and other Sanskrit works stick to the word 'Vīraśaiva' and refuse to use 'Liṅgāyatism'[3]. Therefore, the issue is not whether 'Vīraśaivism' or 'Liṅgāyatism' is the proper name of Basavaṇṇa's religion but whether the two terms have the same connotation.

DISTINCTION BETWEEN LIṄGĀYATISM AND VĪRAŚAIVISM

Scriptural Authority: Vīraśaivas think that Vīraśaivism is older than Liṅgāyatism. Some Vīraśaiva scholars thought that one of the easiest ways to trace the antiquity of Vīraśaivism to a pre-Basava period was to locate its doctrines in the 28 Āgamas and the Vēdas. But as they were certain that neither the Vēdas nor the pure Āgamas extant in Tamil Nadu, Pondicherry and Nepal contained any reference to Vīraśaivism either by name or by doctrines, they began to interpolate some of the principal doctrines of Basava into the latter (uttara) parts

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of some Āgamas around 15th century and called them *Kāmikōttara Āgama*, *Vātulōttara Āgama*, etc. and claimed, though indirectly, that the doctrines of Basavaṇṇa's religion were already present in the Āgamas and that his religion was no more new. But their attempt did not see much success as many people knew that the suffix '*uttara*' (latter) of these Āgamas was itself a proof that their latter parts were not original and their doctrines were later interpolations.

But such machination did not stop. From 1902 onwards The Liṅgī-brāhmaṇa Saṃskṛta Granthamālā of Sholapur began to publish concocted Āgamas, such as *Pāramēśvara Āgama*, *Makuṭa Āgama*, *Sūkṣma Āgama*, *Candrajñāna Āgama*, *Kāraṇa Āgama*, etc. with many more interpolations. While some authors of 15th century added suffix 'uttara' to the titles of the existing Āgamas, the new ones shamelessly published their Āgamas without that suffix, to make them look like original and unadulterated. Hitherto one had heard of only Śaiva Agamas, which were claimed as the sources of Tamil Śaivism (Śaiva Siddhānta), but this publishing house called its publications 'Vīraśaiva Āgamas'. They attempt to show that Vīraśaivism is an orthodox and very ancient sect of Śaivism. In their enthusiasm to execute their double aim they have interpolated into them many doctrines and practices which are diametrically opposite to those of Basavaṇṇa, a radically unorthodox freethinker. We can dwell on some of the outstanding distinctions between them and those of Basava's Liṅgāyatism.

1. Liṅgāyatism of the Vacanas condemns the Vēdic (Hindu) and the Āgamic polytheism and advocates strict monotheism, whereas the corrupt Āgamas, like the Vēdas and the pure and original Āgamas, uphold polytheism.

2. Liṅgāyats avoid performance of the Vēdic rites and sacrifices. But the fake Āgamas argue that a Vīraśaivas must perform sacrifices and rites or else they, like tree cut at the bottom, fall to disrepute. In order to show that performance of sacrifices and rituals is a necessary part of Vīraśaivism a new chapter, entitled 'Hōmavidhi-nirūpaṇaṃ' is added to the latter

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part of *Pāramēśvara Āgama*. The dirt which Basavaṇṇa had thrown out became the sacred vermillion to these Vīraśaivas (for references please see Theory of Āgamic Origin, Chapter III above).

3. Even a casual perusal of the Āgamas reveals that they believe in mythological Śiva, who abides in Kailāsa with Pārvatī, sons Gaṇapati, Kumāra and Vīrabhadra, Rākṣasas, Yakṣas, gods and a host of liberated human beings and who occasionally visits the mortal world either in response to the devotional call of his favourite devotees or in order to test their intensity of devotion. Śiva of Liṅgāyatism who is omnipresent is devoid of anthropomorphism.

Similarly, the author of the *Siddhānta-śikhāmaṇī* offers prayers to both Śiva and his spouse Pārvatī or Śakti in the invocatory Chapter. Śakti which transforms itself into the world is a person according to him. For the Śaiva Siddāntins Pārvatī is the efficient cause and Śakti the substantial cause, thus rendering Śiva unnecessary for creation, while for the Liṅgāyats Śiva is both efficient and substantial cause as Śakti is his inseparable attribute and not a woman.

4. Both the pure and corrupt Āgamas advocate disembodied liberation as the final goal. First the soul eligible for Mōkṣa goes to the world of Śiva (sālokya), it attains proximity to Śiva (sāmīpya), attains the pure form of God (sārūpya) and finally lives with Him (sāyujya). It neither unites with Śiva nor loses its individuality. Liṅgāyatism, on the other hand, advocates liberation while alive which is indistinguishable unity with Liṅga (Śiva). Nor do the Liṅgāyats believe in Kailāsa as a separate world.

5. Vīraśaivas observe the Vēdic caste system strictly. The fake Āgamas advocate that Vīraśaivas are Brahmins and that they, like the Vēdic Brahmins, are superior to other castes of the Liṅga-wearers. Vīraśaivas are prohibited to worship their Liṅga with flowers supplied by Śūdras. Basavaṇṇa condemns caste system vehemently.

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6. Guru, according to Vīraśaivism, must be a Brahmin (Vīraśaiva) whereas Basavaṇṇa says that anybody who has Liṅ ga-experience can become Guru.

7. The fake Āgamas advocate 'Vīraśaivas should not earn their livelihood by means of the profession of a Brahmin or that of a Kṣatriya or that of Vaiṣya or that of a Śūdra . . . In case he does not get sumptuous food he should beg'. One who wears Liṅga must not carry any load on his head or till the land or dig the ground or cut wood. This diametrically opposes Basava's principle that every able-bodied person must have some profession. If Liṅgāyat and Vīraśaiva are the same, then farmers, labourers, wood-cutters, etc. cannot be Vīraśaivas (Liṅgāyats). Mōḷigeya Mārayya, for example, who earned his livelihood by selling firewood cannot be a Vīraśaiva.

8. The fake Āgamas say that 'A Vīraśaiva must not give charity . . .'. When all the religions the world over exhort their followers to give charity to the have-nots, Vīraśaivism stands out as the only religion which opposes charity. Basavaṇṇa advocated that one must earn more and give the excess to the have-nots. Thus the fake Āgamas oppose all the important doctrines of Basavaṇṇa (for details please read 'The Āgamic theory of Origin' under III Chapter).

Considering these facts it is, therefore, utterly wrong to use the two words 'Vīraśaivism' and 'Liṅgāyatism' as synonyms. We should use the former to denote the religion enshrined in the fake Āgamas, the *Śrīkara-bhāṣya* and similar Sanskrit and Kannada works and the latter to denote the religion enshrined in the Vacanas of Basavaṇṇa and his colleagues of 12th century. ■

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CHAPTER THIRTEEN

ANUBHAVA MAṆṬAPA

The word 'Anubhava' or 'Anubhāva' is used in the Vacanas to mean either God-experience or discourse or discussion on God-experience. God-experience or Liṅgānubhava or Śivānubhava is a direct, supra-sensory and supra-intellectual experience or experience of infinite consciousness or soul. Therefore, it is also called knowing oneself (*tanna tānariyuvudu*). Knowing oneself means knowing oneself as essentially featureless consciousness or Liṅga or Bayalu (space). Therefore, it is also called *Bayalāguvudu* (becoming space).

Śaraṇas insist that mere worship, chanting of mantras, eating Prasāda and other acts do not lead to liberation but mystic experience, in addition to these, does. Mystic experience is the necessary means of liberation. As Svatantra Siddhaliṅgēśvara says,

> **Devotion without Experience is like a hero without a weapon;**
> **Practice without Experience is like a lame man without legs; . . .**
> **Devotion, asceticism and liberation need Experience.**
> **One who has no Experience has no liberation; this is it true . . [1].**

Mystic experience (Anubhāva) is a spiritual training; it teachers what you really are; it takes you to your original home[2]. It reveals that you are really Śiva[3].

'Anubhāva' in the second sense is also a necessary requirement for the completion of spiritual training. Devotion without spiritual discussion, says Dāsimayya, a weaver, is

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fruitless and 'if I am not engaged in Anubhava Rāmanātha will cast me into hell'[4].

Among the rules the devotees has to observe two important are, they must avoid the company of Bhavis (non-Liṅgāyats)[5] and must keep company of the mystics (anubhāvis or Śaraṇas). To know God discussion with the Śaraṇas is a prerequisite[6]. Keeping company of Śaraṇas does not allow you to subject yourself to serial rebirths[7]. Śaraṇas' words have remedial value like neem leaves[8]. In a spiritual discourse they narrate the stories of saints, Avatāras, etc. which the listeners consider worth emulating. Just as fire born from friction of wood and wood burns wood, so also knowledge-fire born from the discussion with the great Śaraṇas burns corporeal qualities[9]. Cennabasavaṇṇa says talk with Śaraṇas for at least a minute is greater than performing penance in forest for many years and serving Guru endlessly[10]. It leads to purification of heart. Siddharāma is of the opinion that that discourse is best which teaches silence and consciousness-space[11]. One should not engage spiritual discussion in marketplace or streets[12].

From this it follows that the Śaraṇas congregated in a particular place to discuss spiritual matters and this place was called Anubhava Maṇṭapa.

Many scholars compare the spiritual discussion that took place in Anubhava Maṇṭapa to the dialogues of Plato which Socrates controlled and guided. However, we must note three important points of difference. 1. Socrates was involved in dialogues with his friends and disciples in streets, marketplaces and in his own house as he didn't have a specific place. 2. The Socratic dialogues included topics like state, community, goodness, justice, beauty, duty, trade, friendship, knowledge and opinion, soul, immortality, professions, keeping promise, administration, etc. They did not involve the necessity of mystical experience for the attainment of liberation. 3. The Socratic dialogues were theory oriented. They did not aim at training an administrator or an artist or a judge. On the contrary, the Śaraṇas had the intention of becoming Liṅga and discussion

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and guidance of the mystics were the reason why they came to Anubhava Maṇṭapa. They got instruction in the doctrines and practices of a new religion called Liṅgāyatism which if followed seriously and meticulously would lead to oneness with Liṅga.

When Shri Kapatral Krishna Rao, a lawyer of Kalaburgi, doubted the existence of Anubhava Maṇṭapa in Kalyāṇa, Reverend Chennappa Uttangi wrote two long articles (now printed in the form of books) to prove the historicity of Anubhva Maṇṭapa[13]. In the process he undertook to prove that Basavaṇṇa founded it and that its name was Mahāmane (Great House) and in it Vacanas were discussed, processed, finalized and stored. He also tries to prove that Basavaṇṇa breathed life into the dying religion and real religion consisted in first practising and then teaching. As the Sanātana Dharma is based on the infallible Vēdas it could not be changed or reformed. As Basavaṇṇa knew this he did not think of rejuvenating or reforming it but of constructing a new society based on a new non-Vēdic religion called Liṅgāyatism.

From the fact that Harihara, Rāghavāṅka and Palkuriki Sōmanātha have not mentioned Anubhava Maṇṭapa in their works Krishna Rao infers the non-existence of Anubhava Maṇṭapa. To contend this inference Reverend Chennappa argues that since these authors lived 60 to 80 years after Basavaṇṇa's death or since they were interested in glorifying the life of Basavaṇṇa and his followers they did not pay attention to Anubhava Maṇṭapa it deserved. But from the Vacanas which offer incontrovertible evidences we can infer the existence, objectives and functions of Anubhava Maṇṭapa. The name 'Anubhava Maṇṭapa' might not have been used in the works of Harihara and others, but the name 'Mahāmane', its synonym, is used frequently. Harihara, for example, has used 'Mahāmane' in his *Basavarājadēvara Ragaḷe* in sthala 6, second and tenth paragraphs; 11th Sthala, 175th line; 12th Sthala fourth, fifth and eighth paragraphs, etc[14]. Similarly, Basavaṇṇa has used the word 'Mahāmane' in his Vacanas[15].

Basavaṇṇa says in many Vacanas that he was eager to meet the Śaraṇas who would mend his spiritual life. Reverend

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Chennappa quotes passages from Harihara's *Basavarājadēvara Ragaḷe* to prove that many spiritual seekers from different countries arrived at Kalyāṇa to attend Anubhava Maṇṭapa such as, Cōḷa, Kērala, Pāṇḍya, Gauḷa, Vaṅga, Kaḷiṅga, Mahārāṣṭra, Malayāḷa, Andhra, Śrī Laṅkā, Kashmir, etc. Bhīma adds to this list some more countries like Pāñcāla, Kuruṅga, Sindhu, Turuṣka, Kuntala, Kukura, Karnāṭaka, etc. They included kings, philosophers, poets, singers, orators, some well-versed in many fields, etc.[16]. The list is, perhaps, exaggerated, but at least some did come from nearby countries like the different parts of Karnataka, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu. Not only kings, merchants and the like, but also artisans participated in the programme. *Śūnya Sampādane* records the participation of Dāsimayya, a weaver, Śaṅkara Dāsimayya, a tailor, Mācayya, a washerman, Kētayya, a basket maker, Cauḍayya a ferryman, Cennayya, a cobbler, Bommaṇṇa, a drummer, etc. Women also participated in it like Satyakka, Mahādēvi, Lakkamma, etc. The attendance was not restricted to particular caste or gender.

Since the discussions were only about spiritual matters they had to be in a particular place and Anubhava Maṇṭapa gave a proper spiritual environment for holding such discussion. Basavaṇṇa did not move about like Jesus to preach his new religion because he was to discharge his duty as a Minister. Only in the evening, after his ministerial duties, he could go to teach his new religion in the Anubhva Maṇṭapa.

Allama was not only the centre of discussion but also the guide to spiritual practitioners. Those who got corrective advice from him included Basavaṇṇa, Cennabasavaṇṇa, Akka Mahādēvi, Siddharāma, Maruḷu Śaṅkaradēva, etc.

Some of the important topics that were taught in Anubhava Maṇṭapa were as follows: 1. Proper meaning of devotion (Bhakti); 2. aim of meditation and mystic experience; 3. features of a real mystic; 4. theory and practice of Advaita; 5. importance of Kāyaka and Dāsōha in spiritual life; 6. falsity of belief in Kailāsa and Śiva as other than oneself. 7. Liberation

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means, not attaining a position in Kailāsa after death, but attaining freedom while alive from ignorance and attachment and knowledge that one is Liṅga (Śiva); 8. equilibrium between family life and ascetic life; 9. Jaṅgama is any man who is but a form of Liṅga; food that is given to Jaṅgama is an offer to Liṅga and the act of offering to Jaṅgama is a religious vow. If he is our neighbour he is not inferior or superior to us; 10. we should neither aggrandize our body nor mortify it. Making it hard like a diamond is as futile as denying the satiation of basic desires.

This fact induces us to raise two important questions: 1.What was the necessity for Haḍapada Appaṇna, Okkaliga Muddaṇṇa, Bahurūpi Cauḍayya, Sūḷe Saṅkavve and a host of others to write Vacanas when the leaders like Basavaṇṇa, Cennabasavaṇṇa, Allama Prabhu, Siddharāma and others had already written thousands of Vacanas? This question gains importance when we notice that they did not write anything different from what the leaders had written. 2. How could so many illiterate people, specially, of working class, write Vacanas?

The answer that they were inspired by Basavaṇṇa and others cannot be accepted because only literate people are influenced by the writings of others, not the unlettered. Moreover, that more than 300 people were inspired by them is difficult to accept. Nor the other answer which Kallumaṭhada Prabhudēva could have given, that Vacanas are the outflow of the mystical bliss and those who attended Anubhava Maṇṭapa, had become Yōgis, is acceptable, because mystic bliss is possible only for mystics like Basavaṇṇa, Allama Prabhu, etc. and not for farmer Muddaṇṇa, Cauḍayya the ferryman, etc. who were not mystics.

Many scholars have supposed that Anubhava Maṇṭapa had established school to educate and train people in Vacana writing. But this hypothesis is not supported either by the 12th century or later Vacana writers or by later poets. Moreover, the practice of school education should have continued and this is

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not the case. Liṅgāyats, except a few Jaṅgamas, have remained illiterate till the establishment of free hostels in the first quarter of the twentieth century with a view to facilitating education to all.

So the question is, what was the role of Anubhava Maṇṭapa in shaping so many Vacanakāras and why? It may be answered that in all probability Anubhava Maṇṭapa was the only place where one could know the doctrines of Liṅgāyatism and as Basavaṇṇa, being a minister, did not move out of Kalyāṇa to teach them. He also knew that the new religion could not be propagated single handed and needed the acceptance and support of all people, specially, the working class that were in great number. For this purpose he chose only a few persons of mettle, such as, for example, Muddaṇṇa, Cauḍayya, Mācayya, Saṅkavve, etc. and asked them to propagate Liṅgāyatism by way of authoring Vacanas, because that was the only way of propagating Liṅgāyatism. If you author Vacanas it is certain that you know the doctrines of Liṅgāyatism. Without knowing the Liṅgāyat doctrines you cannot propagate Liṅgāyatism. Hundreds of people might have attended Anubhava Maṇṭapa, but Basavaṇṇa chose only the leaders of the community, like Muddaṇṇa, Cauḍayya, Mācayya, etc. with the intention that they should propagate Liṅgāyatism among person of their respective communities.

Another reason why Basavaṇṇa persuaded people to write Vacanas was that he wanted them to realise that they were creating new literature in place of the old which they had rejected. The intention was not that they should hate Sanskrit or the Vēdas or the Āgamas, but to show displeasure against the religious doctrines which they advocated. People had to prove to him that they rejected the old religion to which they belonged earlier and that their new religion was superior and that they were no more lowly Śūdras or untouchables, but belonged to a superior caste (Kulajas). Most probably, a few people, though unlettered, could author Vacanas without writing them, as do some folklore poets. they authored Vacanas which were later corrected or perfected by other skilful Vacanakāras

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before they became acceptable to other members of the Anubhava Maṇṭapa. Someone wrote for them and one who was in charge of the Vacanas stored them. That precisely was the role of Anubhava Maṇṭapa.

One also suspects that the aim of Anubhava Maṇṭapa was to propagate Basavaṇṇa's idea among the participants of a new kind of society which was a big family of families. The members of the new society were all sons and daughters of Śiva (Śiva-putras or Śiva-putris). The members lived in different families, but belonged to a bigger family. Even from the past the members used to address one another Akka (elder sister), Avva or Tāyi (mother), Tande or Appa (father), Aṇṇa (elder brother), Ayya or Ajja (grand-father), etc. We can easily note that the names of the Vacanakāras have these suffixes and prefixes; for example, Basavaṇṇa, Arivina Māritande, Kakkayya, Akka Mahādēvi, etc[17]. These words do not merely indicate respect, but closeness, affection, kindness and love that one member of a family shows to another. Just as a father or a sister does not like another member of their family to forego food, so a Liṅgāyat should supply food to another member of his society who is hungry. The families need not be actually one, but should behave like one.

■

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67. Dr.Hiremath,R.C. (ed): *Cennabasavaṇṇanavara Vacanagaḷu* (Karnatak University, Dharwad,1971), p.664.
68. "When the mind perceives an object, the intellect determines (its nature), citta (will) decides to act; ego gets the act done by body . . ." (ibid, v.1346).
69. Shivanna,S.(ed): Op.cit., v.74.
70. Hiremath,R.C.(ed): Op.cit., p.663.
71. Shivanna,S.(ed): Op.cit., v.63.
72. Halakatti,P.G. (ed): *Vacana-śāstra-sāra*-II (Editor, Bijapur, 1938), pp.62-64.
73. Rajur,V.B.(ed):*Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-X* (Kannada Book Authority, Bengaluru, 2001), v.677.; Shivanna,S.(ed): Op.cit., vv.38, 39, 71, 72.

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1. Hiremath, R.C. (ed): *Śrī Siddharāmeśvarana Vacanagaḷu* (Karnatak University, Dharwad, 1968), v.30.
2. Ibid, v. 9.
3. Veeranna,V.B.(ed): *Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-V* (Kannada Book Authority,Bengaluru, 2001), v.78.
4. Kalburgi, M.M. (ed):*Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-I.*(Kannada Book Authority, Bengaluru, 2001), v. 57.
5. Halakatti, P.G.(ed):*Vacana-śāstra-sāra*-I (Veerashaiva Adhyayana Samsthe, Gadag, 1982), v. 58.
6. Malledevaru, H.P.(ed):*Uriliṅga Peddiya Vacanagaḷu* (Karnatak University, Dharwad, 1975), v.256.
7. S.Shivanna (ed): *Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-XI.* (Kannada Book Authority, Bengaluru, 2001), v.1.
8. Ibid, v.10.
9. Ibid, v.13
10. Ibid, v.19
11. Ibid, v.21

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12. Ibid, v.25
13. Ibid, v.39
14. Ibid, v.38
15. Ibid, v.39
16. Ibid, v.63
17. Ibid, v.33
18. Ibid, v.39.
19. Halakatti, P.G. (ed): *Vacana-śāstra-sāra*-II, (Author, Bijapur, 1938), pp.44-5.
20. S.Shivanna, Op.cit, v. 74.
21. Hiremath, R.C. and Sunkapur, M.S. (eds):*Allama Prabhudēvara Vacanagaḷu* (Karnatak University, Dharwad, 1970), v. 709.
22. S.Shivanna(ed): Op.cit, v. 74.
23. Ibid, v. 63.
24. "From that Mahāliṅga, as from a seed a tree is born, Sadāśivamūrti with six mouths was born". Halakatti, P.G. (ed): *Vacana-śāstra-sāra*, vol. II., p. 49.
25. Rajur,V.B.(ed): Op.cit.v.78.
26. S.Shivanna, Op.cit., v. 39.
27. Halakatti, P.G.(ed): *Vacana-śāstra-sāra*-I, v.17.
28. Rajur,V.B.(ed): Op.cit.v.232
29. Rajur,V.B.(ed): Op.cit., v. 256.
30. Kalburgi, M.M. (ed):*Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-I.* (Kannada Book Authority,Bengaluru, 2001), v.5.
31. Ibid.v.63
32. Ibid., v.115.
33. Ibid., v. 155.
34. Ibid., v. 239
35. Mallapur, B.V.(ed): *Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-III.* (Kannada Book Authority,Bengaluru, 2001), v. 22.
36. S.Shivanna (ed): Op.cit., vv. 161, 163, 166, 173.
37. Ibid., vv. 845, 848.
38. Rajur,V.B.(ed): *Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-XIII.* (Kannada Book Authority,Bengaluru, 2001), vv. 2-225.
39. Mallapur,B.V.(ed):*Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-II* (Kannada Book Authority,Bengaluru, 2001), vv.8, 29.

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40. Kalburgi, M.M. (ed): *Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-I* (Kannada Book Authority, Bengaluru, 2001), v.7.
41. Kalburgi, M.M.(ed): Op.cit. vv.7-69.

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1. Bertrand Russell, *History of Western Philosophy* (George Allen and Unwin, London, 1974 reprint), p.550.
2. Kalburgi, M.M.(ed):*Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-VI* (Kannada Book Authority,Bengaluru, 2001), v. 575.
3. Ibid, v. 842.
4. B.V.Mallapur (ed): *Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-II* (Kannada Book Authority,Bengaluru, 2001), v.1220.
5. Ibid., v.349.
6. Ibid, v.372.
7. S.Shivanna (ed): *Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-XI* (Kannada Book Authority, Bengaluru, 2001), v. 969.
8. Ibid., v. 260.
9. Ibid, v. 39
10. Kalburgi, M.M.(ed):*Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-I* (Kannada Book Authority, Bengaluru, 2001), vv.186, 187, 196, 217, etc.
11. Ibid, v. 863.
12. Kalburgi, M.M.(ed):: *Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-VI* , v. 1.
13. Ibid., v.494.
14. Ibid., v.37.
15. Ibid., v.645.
16. S. Shivanna: Op.cit., v.39.
17. Ibid., v. 260.
18. Ibid., v. 1155.
19. Kalburgi, M.M.(ed): *Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-I*, v. 952.
20. Ibid.v.620.
21. S. Shivanna: op.cit., v.61.
22. Dr.M.M.Kalburgi (ed): *Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-I*, vv. 285, 452, 458, 510, 603, 627, 670, 671, 675, 710, 711, 768, 789, etc.; Dr.B.V.Mallapur (ed): *Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-II*, vv. 64, 109, 381, 382, 404, 468, 472, etc.; Dr.B.V.Mallapur (ed):

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Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-III, vv.144, 150, 163, 165, 167, 169, 170, etc. Others follow suit.

23. Kalburgi, M.M.(ed): *Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-I*, vv. 3, 7, 21, 68, 69, 79, 102, etc.
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Mallapur.B.V.(ed): *Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-III*, vv. 27, 64, 73, 81, 101, etc.Others follow suit.
24. Kalburgi, M.M.(ed): *Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-I*, v.4.
25. Ibid., v.5.
26. Ibid., vv.7-69.
27. Mallapur,B.V.(ed): *Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-II*, vv.12-45.
28. Kalburgi, M.M.(ed): *Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-I*, vv.7, 774.
29. Menezes, A. and Aṅgadi, S.M., (trs): *Vacanas of Basavaṇṇa* (Anna Balaga, Sirigere, 1968), v. 21.
30. Ibid, v.27.
31. Ibid, v.57.
32. Ibid., v.24.
33. Ibid., vv. 20, 21, 22, 23, etc.
34. Ibid., vv. 106, 239, 240, etc.

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2. Ibid, v.741.
3. Kalburgi, M.M.(ed):*Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-VI* (Kannada Book Authority, Bengaluru, 2001), vv.1286, 1287
4. Kalburgi, M.M.(ed):*Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-I*, v.139.
5. Ibid., v. 239. 6. Ibid. v. 924,
7. Mallapur, B.V.(ed):*Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-II* (Kannada Book Authority, Bengaluru, 2001),v.1143.
8. Halakatti, P.G.(ed):*Vacana-śāstra-sāra*-I (Veerashaiva Adhyayana Samsthe, Gadag, 1982), v.195.
9. Mallapur, B.V.(ed): Op.cit.,vv.505, 507.
10. *Siddhānta-śikhāmaṇī*, First Chapter.
11. Mallapur, B.V.(ed):Op.cit. v.888.

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12. Ibid. v.1134.
13. Kalburgi, M.M.(ed):*Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-I*, v.1291.
14. Mallapur, B.V.(ed):Op.cit. v.500. Also see his vv. 606, 709, etc.
15. Kalburgi, M.M.(ed):*Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-I*, v.921.
16. Ibid., v.924.
17. Mallapur, B.V.(ed):Op.cit. v.1542.
18. Shivanna,S.(ed): *Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-XI* (Kannada Book Authority, Bengaluru, 2001), v.59.
19. Mallapur, B.V.(ed):*Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-III* (Kannada Book Authority, Bengaluru, 2001), v.1292.
20. Mallapur, B.V.(ed):*Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-II*, v.639.
21. Kalburgi, M.M.(ed):*Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-I*, v.930.
22. Mallapur, B.V.(ed):*Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-II*, v. 689.
23. Ibid. v.383.
24. Ibid. v. 626.
25. Mallapur, B.V.(ed):*Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-III*, v.1266.
26. Kalburgi, M.M.(ed):*Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-VI*, v.1016.
27. Shivanna,S.(ed): Op.cit., v.460.
28. Mallapur, B.V.(ed):*Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-III*, v.1046.
29. Ibid., v.1047.
30. Ibid., vv. 1303, 2016.
31. Mallapur, B.V.(ed):*Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-II*, v.845.
32. Vidyashankara,S.(ed): *Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-VII* (Kannada Book Authority, Bengaluru, 2001), v.564.
33. Mallapur, B.V.(ed):*Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-III*, v.1578.
34. Ibid., v. 974.
35. Kalburgi, M.M.(ed):*Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-I*, v.916.
36. Mallapur, B.V.(ed):*Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-II*, v. 304.

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2. Kalburgi, M.M.(ed): *Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-I* (Kannada Book Authority, Bengaluru, 2001), v. 70

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3. Hiremath, B.R. (ed): *Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-IX* (Kannada Book Authority, Bengaluru, 2001), v. 154.
4. Shivanna,S.(ed):*Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-XI* (Kannada Book Authority, Bengaluru, 2001), vv.158, 160.
5. Kalburgi, M.M. (ed): Op.cit., vv.71, 72
6. Mallapur, B.V.(ed):*Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-II*, (Kannada Book Authority, Bengaluru, 2001), v. 51.
7. Mallapur, B.V. (ed):*Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-III*, v.1424.
8. Kalburgi, (ed): *Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-VI* (Kannada Book Authority, Bengaluru,2001), vv.38, 40.
9. Mallapur, B.V.(ed):*Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-II*, vv.55, 63
10. Mallapur, B.V.(ed):*Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-III*, vv. 144.
11. Ibid, vv.1230.
12. Shivanna, S. (ed): Op.cit., v.163.
13. Kalburgi,M.M.(ed):*Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-I*, v.350.
14. Siddharāma Śaraṇaru Beldāḷa, *Cennabasavaṇṇanavara Vacana-vyākhyāna* (Jagadguru Shree Shivaratreeshvara Granthamale, Mysuru, 2005) vv. 111, 112
15. Kalburgi,M.M.(ed): *Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-I*, v. 72.
16. Kalburgi,M.M.(ed): *Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-VI*, vv.93.
17. Ibid, v.111.
18. Kalburgi,M.M.(ed): *Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-I*, v.614
19. Ibid., v. 923
20. Shivanna (ed): Op.cit, v.178.
21. Kalburgi,M.M.(ed): *Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-I*, v.183.
22. Chakravarti, Haripada (ed&tr): *Pāśupata-sūtram with Pañcārtha-bhāṣya of Kauṇḍinya* (Acamic Publishers, Kolkata-9), pp.56-59.
23. ibid. p.207
24. Basappa,S.(ed): *Kereya Padmarasana Dīkṣābōdhe* (University of Mysuru, Mysuru, 1972), Second Sthala, lines 620-630 and śls.131, 132.
25. '*sthāvara jaṅgama ondē*', Kalburgi,M.M.(ed): *Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa vol.I*, v.187.
26. Ibid, v. 428.
27. Vidyashankara,S.(ed):*Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-IV* (Kannada Book Authority, Bengaluru, 2001), v. 1774.

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27a. Hiremath,B.R.(ed):*Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-IX* (Kannada Book Authority, Bengaluru,2001), v.837
27b. Kalburgi,M.M.(ed): *Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-I*, v.247.
28. Ibid., v.189
29. Ibid., v.191
30. Ibid., v.194
31. Ibid., v.247
32. Ibid., v.196
33. Ibid., v.196
34. Ibid., vv.197-201, 203, 204, etc.
35. Ibid., v.820
36. Ibid., v.223
37. Ibid., vv.285, 286
38. Mallapur, B.V.(ed):*Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-III*, v.1265.
39. Hiremath, R.C.and Sunkapur, M.S.(eds): *Allama Prabhudēvara Vacanagaḷu* (Karnatak University, Dharwad, 1976) v. 928.
40. Mallapur, B.V.(ed):*Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-III*, vv.7, 8.
41. Kalburgi,M.M.(ed): *Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-I*, v.389.
42. Ibid, v. 684.
43. Hiremath,B.R.(ed): *Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa vol.VIII*, v.611; Hiremath,B.R.(ed): *Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa vol.IX*, v.947.
44. Hiremath,B.R.(ed):*Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-VIII*, v.455; Vidyashankara,S (ed):*Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-VII*, v.362; Vidyashankara,S (ed):*Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-IV*, v.1421.
45. Kalburgi,M.M. and Rajur, V.B.(eds): *Śūnya-sampādane* of Gūḷūru Siddhavīraṇṇoḍeya (Jagadguru Tontadarya Samsthana Matha, Gadag, 2016), Ch.III.
46. Mallapur, B.V.(ed):*Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-III*, vv.1134, 1511.
47. Kalburgi,M.M.(ed): *Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-I*, v.193; Kalburgi,M.M.(ed): *Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-VI*, vv.1181, 1182.
48. Rajur,V.B.(ed): *Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-V* (Kannada Book Authority, Bengaluru,2016), vv.630, 632.
49. R.C.Hiremath and M.S.Sunkapur (eds): *Allama Prabhudēvara Vacanagaḷu*, Karnatak University, Dharwad, 1976) v. 928.

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50. Mallapur, B.V.(ed):*Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-III*, vv. 7, 8.
51. Ibid, v.247
52. Halakatti,P.G.(ed): *Vacana-śāstra-sāra-III* (Jagadguru Tontadarya Matha, Gadag-Dambal 2nd print, 2004), v.743.
53. Mallapur, B.V.(ed):*Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-III*, v. 928.
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55. Mallapur, B.V.(ed):*Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-III*, v.1158.
56. Ibid., v.1157
57. Halakatti,P.G.(ed): *Vacana-śāstra-sāra-III*, v. 756.
58. Sri Mallikarjuna Shivayogi (commentator): *Siddhānta-śikhāmaṇi* (Shivananda Matha, Gadag, 2nd print, 1979), ch. XIX, commentaries on ślōkas 6, 7.
59. Ibid: commentaries on ślōkas,. 8, 12, 13, 15, 19, 22.
60. Kalburgi,M.M.(ed): *Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa vol.I*, v.73.
61. Shivanna,S. (ed): Op.cit. vv.185, 186
62. Ibid., v.191.
63. Kalburgi,M.M.(ed): *Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-I*, v.81.
63a. Ibid., v.79.
64. Shivanna, S. (ed):op.cit, v.198.
65. Ibid, v.197.
66. Mallapur, B.V.(ed):*Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-III*, v.24.
67. Shivanna, S (ed): Op.cit. v.208.
68. Ibid., v. 201.
69. Mallapur, B.V.(ed):*Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-III*, v.1532.
70. Kalburgi,M.M.(ed): *Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-VI*, v.1545; Mallapur, B.V. (ed): *Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-II*, v.145.
71. Vidyashankara,S. (ed):*Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-VII*, vv.734, 748.
72. Mallapur, B.V. (ed): *Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-III*, v.1279.

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2. Kalburgi,M.M.(ed):*Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-I* (Kannada Book Authority, Bengaluru, 2001), v.110.
3. Ibid., v.148.

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4. Ibid., v.149.
5. John Hick, *Philosophy of Religion* (Prentice-Hall of India, Delhi, 1979), pp.54-5
6. Mallapur,B.V.(ed):*Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-III* (Kannada Book Authority, Bengaluru, 2001), v.1139. 7. Kalburgi,M.M. (ed): Op.cit. v.240.
8. Rajur,V.B.(ed):*Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-V*, (Kannada Book Authority, Bengaluru,2001), v.251.
9. Kalburgi.M.M.(ed): Op.cit., v.196.
10. Ibid., vv.395, 608.
10a. Ibid., vv.72, 73.
11. Ibid. vv.554-60, 562
12. Ibid.,v.182.
13. Ibid.v.545.
14. Ibid.,vv.103, 109
15. Ibid.,v.962; Kalburgi,M.M.(ed): *Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-VI* (Kannada Book Authority, Bengaluru, 2001), v.93.
16. Kalburgi,M.M.(ed):*Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-I*, v.614.
17. Ibid.,v.126.
18. Ibid.,v.103.
19. Mallapur, B.V.(ed):*Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-III* (Kannada Book Authority, Bengaluru, 2001), v.148.
20. Kalburgi,M.M.(ed):*Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-I*, v. 696.
21. Ibid. vv. 705, 708.
22. Ibid., v.128.
23. Rajur,V.B.(ed):*Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-V* (Kannada Book Authority, Bengaluru,2001), vv.726, 727.
24. Kalburgi,M.M.(ed): *Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-I*, v.116.
25. Ibid., v.651
26. Ibid., vv. 688, 689
27. Ibid., vv. 692, 693
28. Ibid., v.678
29. Ibid., v.220.
30. *Kāraṇāgama*, 5th Paṭala, ślōkas 4, 5, 22.
31. Kalburgi,M.M.(ed): *(vol.I.) op.cit*, vv.184, 190, 228
32. Ibid., v.181.

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33. Ibid., v.228.
34. Mallapur, B.V.(ed):*Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-II* (Kannada Book Authority, Bengaluru, 2001), v.120
35. Rajur,V.B. (ed): Op.cit, v. 391
36. Mallapur, B.V.(ed):*Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-III* (Kannada Book Authority, Bengaluru, 2001), v.346.
37. Ibid., v. 584.
38. Kalburgi,M.M.(ed): *Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-I*, vv.103, 273
39. Rajur,V.B. (ed):Op.cit. v. 564.
40. Mallapur, B.V.(ed):*Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-III*, v.406
41. Kalburgi,M.M.(ed): *Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-I*, v.677
42. Hiremath,B.R.(ed):*Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-VIII* (Kannada Book Authority, Bengaluru, 2001),v.685
43. Mallapur, B.V.(ed):*Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-III*, v.159.
44. Kalburgi,M.M.(ed): *Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-I*, v.451.
45. Mallapur, B.V.(ed):*Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-III*, v.316.
46. Kalburgi,M.M.(ed): *Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-I*, v.458.
47. Ibid. v.510; also see vv.626, 671, 675, Mallapur,B.V.(ed): *Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa vol.III*, 39.
48. Mallapur,B.V.(ed): *Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-III*, v.165.
49. Kalburgi,M.M.(ed): *Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-I*, v.576.
50. Ibid.v.874
51. Ibid.v.766.
52. Ibid.v.274.
53. Ibid.v.612.
54. Ibid.v.243.
55. Ibid.vv.135, 136.
56. Ibid.vv.356, 361.
57. Ibid.v. 245.
58. Ibid.vv.171, 449.
59. Ibid.v.212.
60. Mallapur,B.V.(ed): *Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-III*, v.1559.
61. Ibid., v.279. Here Cennabasavaṇṇa is referring to a miraculous incident narrated in Bhīma's *Basavapurāṇa*. When some people complain to Bijjaḷa that Basavaṇṇa and his followers do not distribute Prasāda to them, Basavaṇṇa argues that his followers

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do not distinguish between poison and nectar if it is Śiva's Prasāda and if the complainants have similar attitude to Prasāda, he would distribute it among them. His followers prepare a concoction out of poisonous plants and consume it as Prasāda as if it is nectar, while the compalnants hesitate.

62. Kalburgi,M.M.(ed): *Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-I*, v.772.
63. Mallapur,B.V.(ed): *Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-III*, v.236.
64. Ibid., v.846.
65. Mallapur,B.V.(ed): *Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-II*, v.564.
66. Mallapur,B.V.(ed): *Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-III*, v.628.
67. Kalburgi,M.M.(ed): *Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-VI*, v.1330; Shivanna,S.(ed): Op.cit, v.995.
68. Kalburgi,M.M.(ed): *Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-I*, v.775.
69. Mallapur, B.V.(ed): *Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-II*, v.93.
70. Mallapur, B.V.(ed): *Samagra-vacana-sampuṭa-III*, v. 270.
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Seeing a stone image of snake
They say 'offer it milk';
But seeing a real snake they say 'kill it'.
Seeing a hungry man come they say 'go away';
But seeing a liṅga they say 'offer it food'.
Those who ignore Kūḍalasaṅga's devotees
Will be like a lump of clay hit by a stone.

- Basavaṇṇa

Knowing everything but Liṅga is useless.
Knowing anything after knowing Liṅga is useless;
Because Liṅga is the cause of everything...

- Allama Prabhu

When people of different castes come to drink water,
Does the water drive them away,
Sayng 'get burnt, get lost'?
Should not the elders be like the water?
O Lord, when will I get such equanimity?...

- Siddharāma

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